

# THAI'S PERCEPTIONS OF EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Requirements  
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Field of Study	European Studies
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พรเพชรราณีวรรณ วชิรเทวาทิกักดิ์ : ทัศนของคนไทยต่อทวีปยุโรปและสหภาพยุโรป. ( THAI'S PERCEPTIONS OF EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION) อ.ที่ปรึกษา  
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การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาและเปรียบเทียบความคิดเห็นของคนไทยในปัจจุบันที่มีต่อทวีปยุโรป สหภาพยุโรป และการเข้าถึงข่าวสารของคนไทยเกี่ยวกับข่าวและข้อมูลของทวีปยุโรป และสหภาพยุโรป โดยมีเนื้อหาบางส่วนเกี่ยวกับความคิดเห็นต่อชาวยุโรปด้วย การศึกษานี้เน้นการใช้ข้อมูลเชิงปริมาณ โดยการเก็บข้อมูลจากชุดคำถามที่สอบถามคนไทยจำนวนหนึ่ง ผลลัพธ์ทั้งหมดสามารถสรุปได้ว่าทัศนของคนไทยในปัจจุบันต่อทวีปยุโรป สหภาพยุโรป และการเข้าถึงข่าวสารเกี่ยวกับทวีปยุโรปและสหภาพยุโรปนั้นมีทั้งเชิงบวกและเชิงลบ ซึ่งผลลัพธ์ขึ้นอยู่กับแต่ละหัวข้อ ขอบเขต และปัจจัยสนับสนุนในด้านต่างๆ



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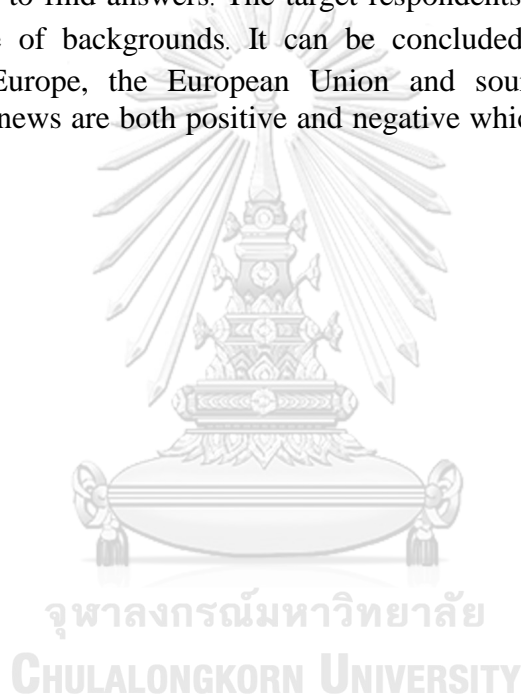
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This study aims to examine Thai's perceptions of Europe, the European Union, and the Europeans and to identify sources of Europe and the European Union news that Thai ordinarily access. The study is collected by using quantitative data as a method to find answers. The target respondents are a group of Thai who have wide range of backgrounds. It can be concluded that the current Thai's perceptions of Europe, the European Union and sources of Europe and the European Union news are both positive and negative which depend on topic, scope and factor.



Field of Study: European Studies  
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I greatly appreciate 400 respondents who joining me in the questionnaire. The analysis of this study could not have been completed without their kind support.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

Ayutthaya is widely believed to be one of the most important ancient kingdom of Siam (Thailand). A great number of Thai study Ayutthaya's history since they were young. Educational system strengthens to serve us that Ayutthaya was dominant in warfare, administration and trade. The kingdom became powerful despite having small land because of international trade. Ayutthaya located at the middle of Southeast Asia. It well-known as hub of merchandise who travel around. People who interacted with Ayutthaya came from farther and farther lands, from neighboring, e.g.) China and India, to other continents, e.g.) Europe and the Middle East. Ayutthaya trade's prosperous was a generate point of Thailand's multiculturalism which integrated to become contemporary Thai.

Any trip abroad in the past was not convenient and easy as much as today, especially to those who live far away. People who made their way to Ayutthaya must live there for a certain period for its travelling cost worthiness. The more they spent time here, the more than blend in with local. The Europeans connect with people, specifically high society. The Royal house allow them to settle community in provided area. Those communities still living until today, such as, Portugal community.

If we reflect back about Thai's history since Ayutthaya, it's undeniable that building the nation process always had Europe involvement in every step. Nevertheless, nothing is free from the world's cycle as everything changes over time. The role of Europe and the Europeans is not the same as previous time according to the world different era. It can be said that the context of Europe's role on Thai is gradually changing, but, their importance to Thailand remain the same or even increasing. Europe is consistently Thailand's key companion through new world's challenges. The transition of society and atmosphere can transform people's perception toward something. People perceptions between hundred years ago may not be the same with people who were born 10 years ago. Let's explore how Thai's perception see Europe and the EU presently.

### Research Objectives

The objectives of this section are to present the key survey findings and to inform and clarify the following requirements:

- 1) To examine Thai's perceptions of Europe (and the Europeans)
- 2) To examine Thai's perceptions of the European Union
- 3) To identify sources of Europe and the European Union news

## **Hypothesis**

I suppose that the majority of respondents know Europe and the EU at a reasonable level as the society is more open from the integrated world. Nevertheless, Thai may not know them in a profound step if compare to Asian nations. Europe and Thailand live far apart where our culture is hard to collide.

## **Scope**

I will conduct a questionnaire, both soft and hard copy, specifically to Thai in order to get the most accurate answer. The question will ask broad range of citizen from different age and gender. Most questions are going to focus on their perceptions of Europe and the EU. All questions will reflect on personal perceptions of Thais.

## **Literature Review**

European is long well-known as one of the best navigator to discover the new land. They are liberal and a visionary leader. Most of them run their business everywhere they stepped into, which make them rich and seize their power at last. Thailand is another nation that welcome foreigner even though we have a sense of fear deep down. Both Europe and Thai underwent all taste of relationship, including bitter, sweet and sour. They overcame conflicts and enjoy mutual understanding due to different context. Their bond was mainly strong in the society of royal, elite and capitalist then started to wider to other classes. Nowadays, Thailand also has bilateral diplomatic with each of the EU's Member States. Their cooperation is strong in the field of traveling. The majority of Thai dream to visit Europe once in their lifetime, while Tom Yam Kung and Thai Boxing are attracting European to book the plane ticket to Thailand. However, it's still unclear on what is Thai's current perception of Europe and the EU after we experienced long relation with wide range of cooperation. The relationship between Siamese and westerner was not deep at the beginning. Diplomatic relationship between Thailand and elsewhere can count since the ancient Sukhothai Kingdom. At that time, Thailand was still "Siam" (which later will be converted to "Thailand" in consonance with the timeline), they first built a connection with neighboring countries, such as, Khmer, Lanka and China. When Sukhothai kingdom became one with Ayutthaya, that was when they travel further to greet western. In the year 1511, King Narai saw an importance of building relationship with outsiders, he ordered a big group of ambassador shipping to Europe. It was the same year when Portugal entered to Siam as the first European nation. This was a new phenomenon in past time as it was the first time to show their strong intention in having a good partnership and start diplomatic relation. This remarkable trip become one of the most famous Thai's historical diplomatic scene. Nevertheless, local were afraid of Europe because they assume that the group came with negative purposes, aiming to transform Thai's belief from Buddhism to new religions<sup>2</sup>. Hence, Thai were not firmly trusted European during this particular duration.

Europe become main core of Siam high society. Throughout the reign of King Chulalongkorn (King Rama V), Siamese knew that Europe gain more power and it is necessary to interact with them as to secure the nation's stability. France and Siam had tension over territory division once. People then displeas with European. Four years later, King Chulalongkorn made a royal visit to Europe, marked as the first King of Siam who had a trip to the west. His journey made the pair's relationship bloom that "Pro-Europe" was strong in the Royal House. The King announced his royal command for Siamese revolution in administration, infrastructure and technology, and society. This is the decision to follow Europe's step and tell outsider that Siam will be civilized. More than that, the king's sons studied at Europe by the full support of him. Siam then had the first King who success the European's study program and lived there for more than 10 years, which is King Vajiravudh (King Rama VI)<sup>3</sup>.

The European Union offer abundant aid to Thailand, along with collaboration in various areas, counting politic, economic and humanitarian. It results to a lift of their relationship up to the status of satisfaction because both see each other's importance. However, most of their action were made by bilateral talk with each of the EU's Member States. We can see from the constantly visit of high-level representative, such as, minister and ambassador.

In conclusion, Europeans is among the first few nations from far-land that visited Thailand (Siam) since we began to set up relationship with others. European always have had a significant role in Thailand's history. In the era of Ayutthaya, people were quite afraid of them due to the fear of new religious spreader. Next period, King Chulalongkorn, it was when flower bloom again after His Majesty's visit to Europe. Their relation was mainly active in the society of the Royal House. It is far impossible for normal Thai citizen to have close tie with Europeans because most of westerner engaged with upper class themselves. The clock doesn't stop ticking, as people don't stop moving. Persons live in more interconnected world. Interaction between Europe and Thailand spread to people-to-people level much more than ever. There were few papers raised up questions relating to Europeans, for example, who are the Farang in Thai constructions of knowledge? How long have Farang become part of the discourse of Thainess? And what are the effects of Farang on Thai national and cultural identities?<sup>4</sup> I found out that there is still none mention on up-to-date point of view from Thais. Therefore, I would like to find the answer to fill in this missing piece.

### **Research methods**

This study need both primary and secondary data. The questionnaire need to be done as a method to collect Thai's perspectives. At the same time, the use of background information is necessary. The paper need deep and wide explanation

about their relationship since the beginning. The second data is required for providing background information of all relationship between Europe and Thailand.

## **Portrait of the Survey Respondents**

### **Population**

Thailand National Statistical Office under Ministry of Digital Economy and Society has estimated Thailand's 2022 population to be about 66,171,439 million (32,339,118 million males, 33,960,884 females). The median age in Thailand is 39 years (2020) and the life expectancy at birth is about 74.39 years for male and 80.6 years for female (2021). About 5.53 million of Thais live in urban areas (Bangkok). Owing to its large size, population density in Thailand is 137 people per square kilometers.

### **Sample**

A list of online survey was generated by the collectors. This paper's respondents are 400 people. The collector believes that 400 will give data accuracy in a limit of time.

### **Questionnaire**

There are four sections in the survey that respondent need to fill-in:

- 1) Personal information
- 2) Thai's perceptions of Europe
- 3) Thai's perceptions of the European Union
- 4) Thai's perceptions of Europe and the European Union news

## CHAPTER 2

### THAI'S PERCEPTIONS OF EUROPE

#### Personal Information

This section aims to collect general background of respondents. Individual background can influence over respondents. Only three questions are required to give answers.

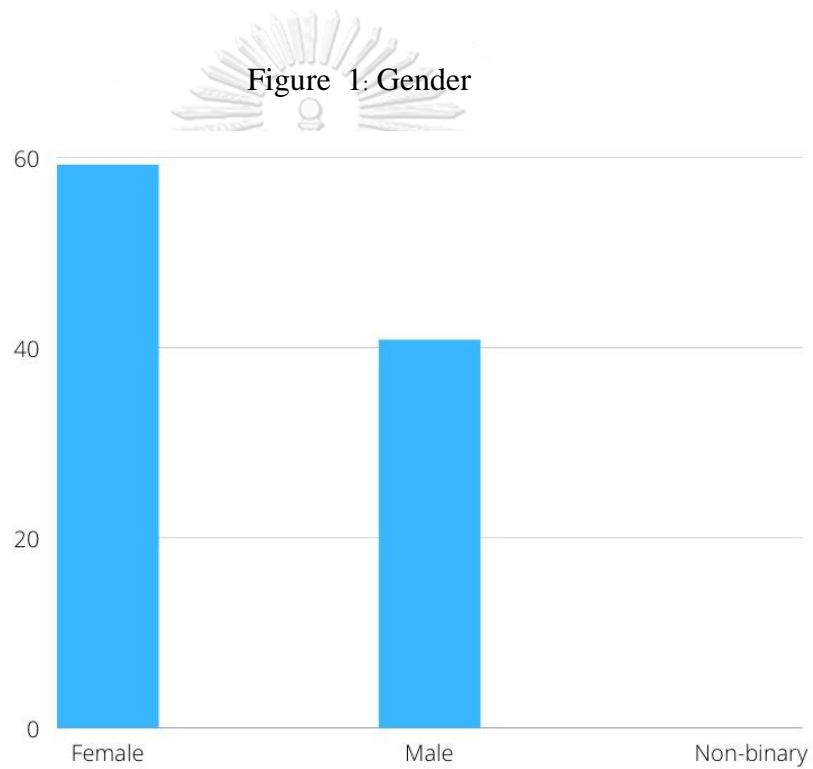


Figure 2: Age

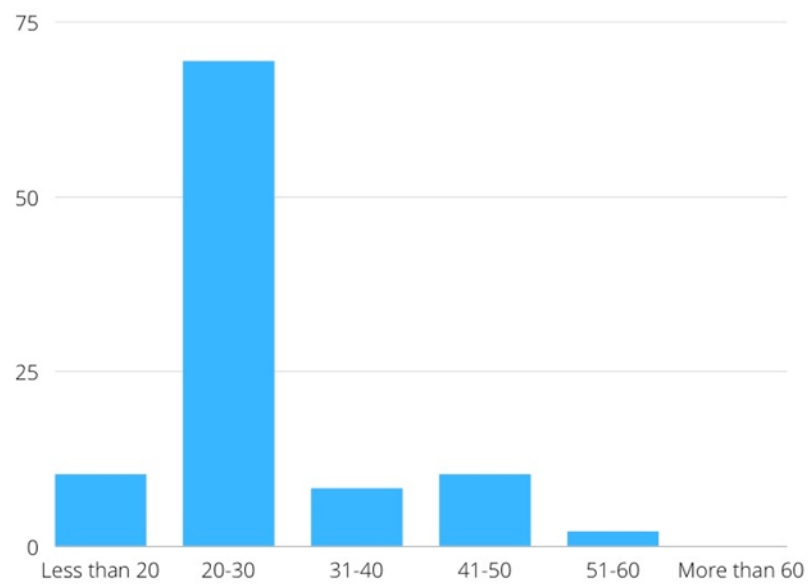
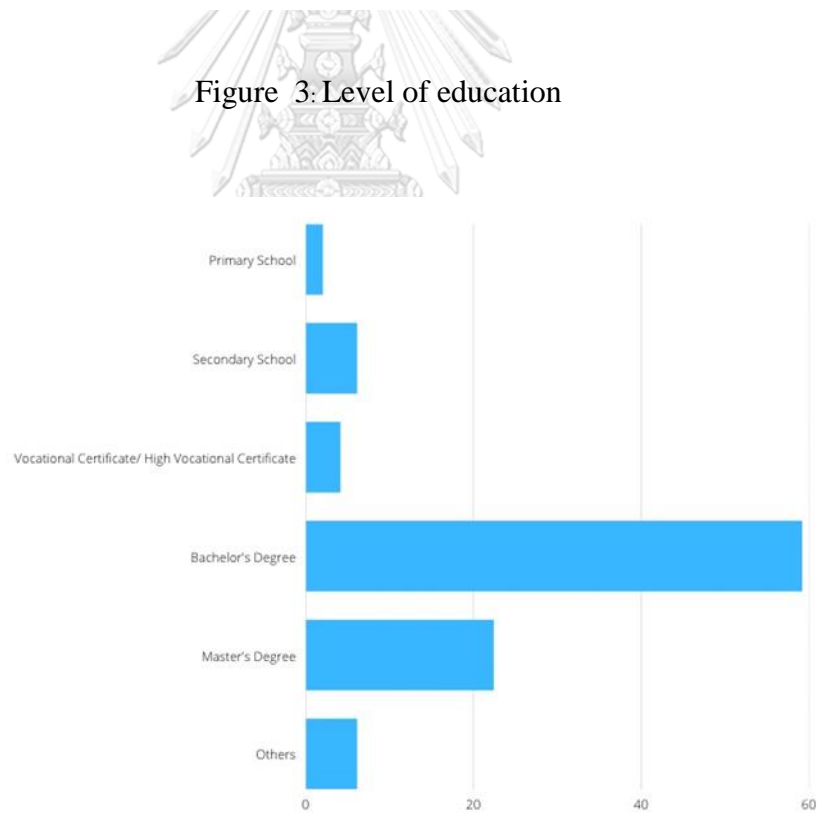


Figure 3: Level of education



## Summary

In terms of the distribution of males and females, more women than men represented in the sample, 60.9 percent of respondents is female and 39.1 percent is male. The majority of participants age between 20 - 30 years. Only 2.1 percent from 51 - 60 years get involved. More than half of them received Bachelor's Degree. Almost 20 percent graduated Master's Degree. Nearly a third of participants finished Primary School, Secondary School, Vocational certificate/ High Vocational certificate/ Diploma and others. It's clear that most respondents are young-adult and well-educated.





## CHAPTER 3

### Thai's perceptions of Europe

The nature of human is moving for the better. Many people love exploring new place with individual reason. Some move for travelling, many of them purchase the dram, while someone would like to travelling the world. There is uncountable travel content on Thai's social media. However, travelling to Europe is among the most popular on the internet.

This part contains questions that aim to learn Thai's perception of Europe. Also, asking about the connection between the Europeans and Thai.

Figure 4: Do you know Europe?

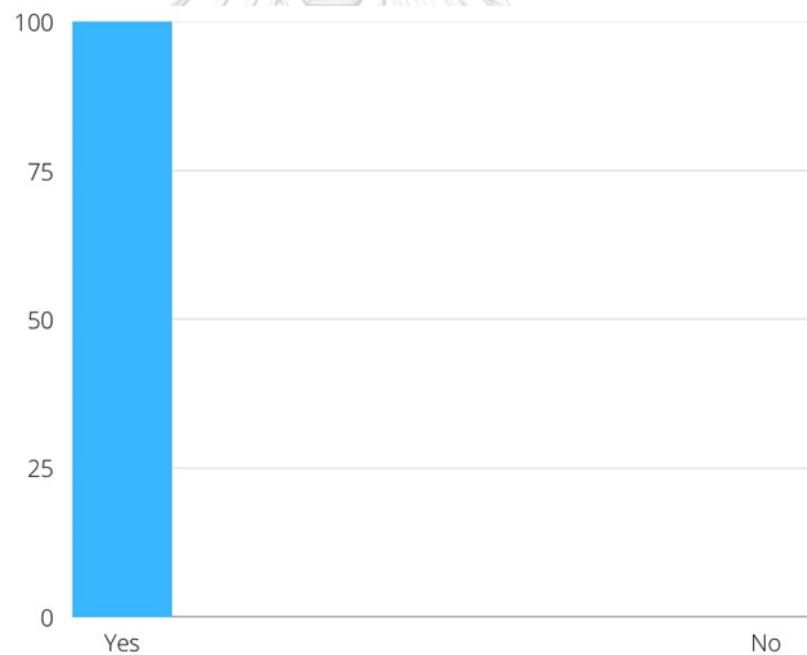


Figure 5: Do you like Europe?

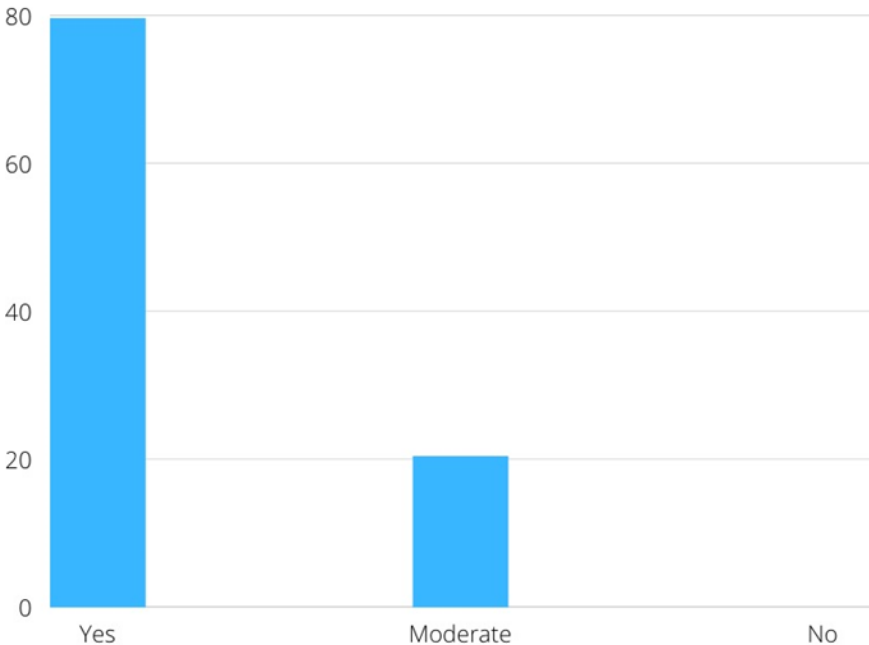


Figure 6: Which country first come up to your mind when you think of Europe?  
(Please fill in number)

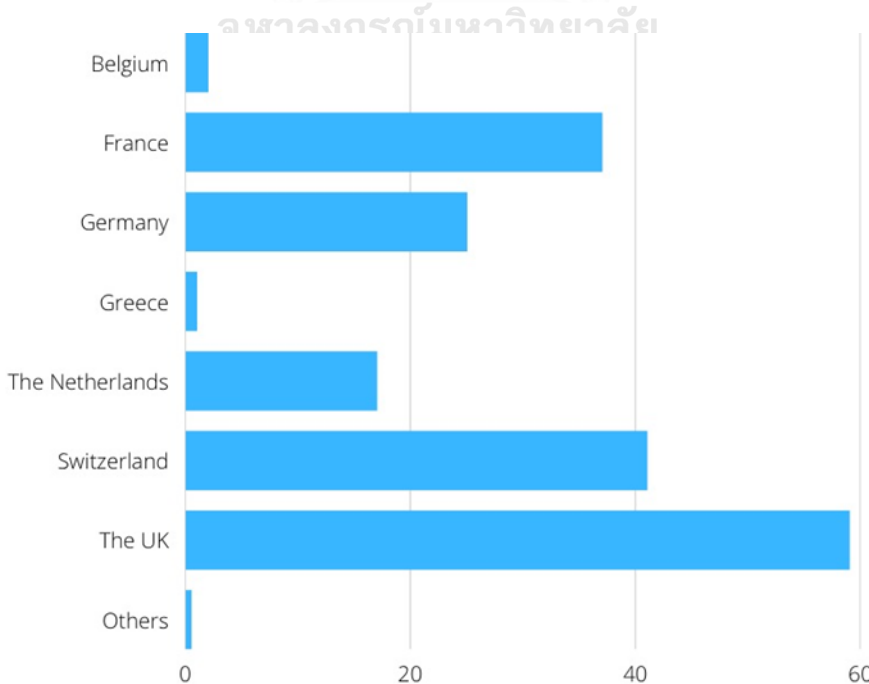


Figure 7: What is the most prominent point of Europe?

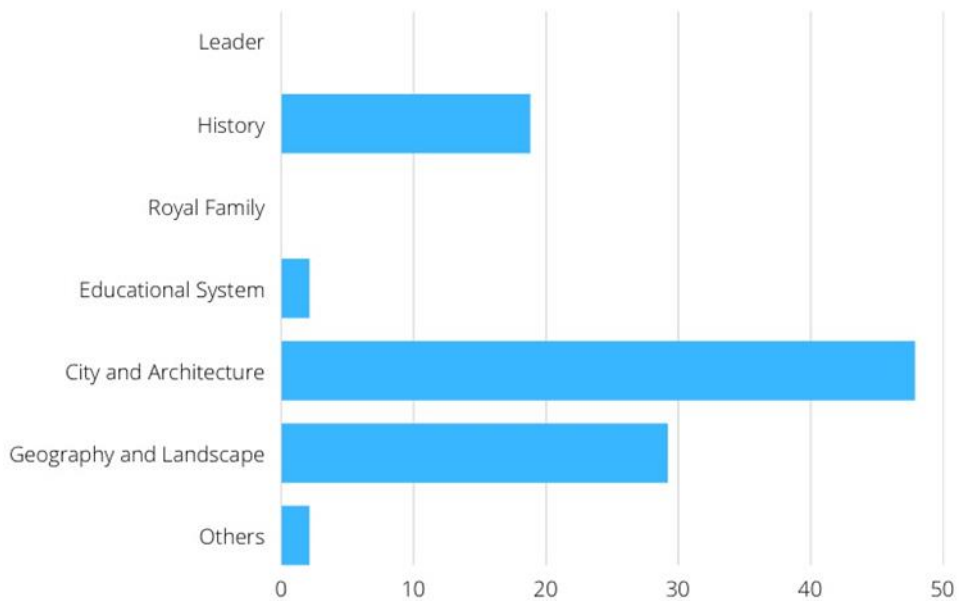


Figure 8: What is the most attractive culture of Europe?

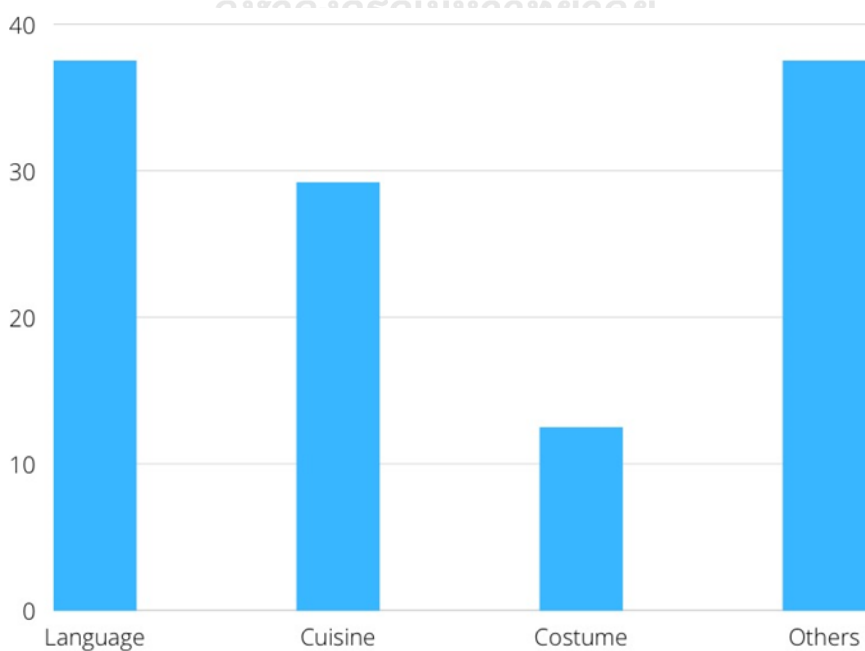


Figure 9: Have you ever been to Europe?

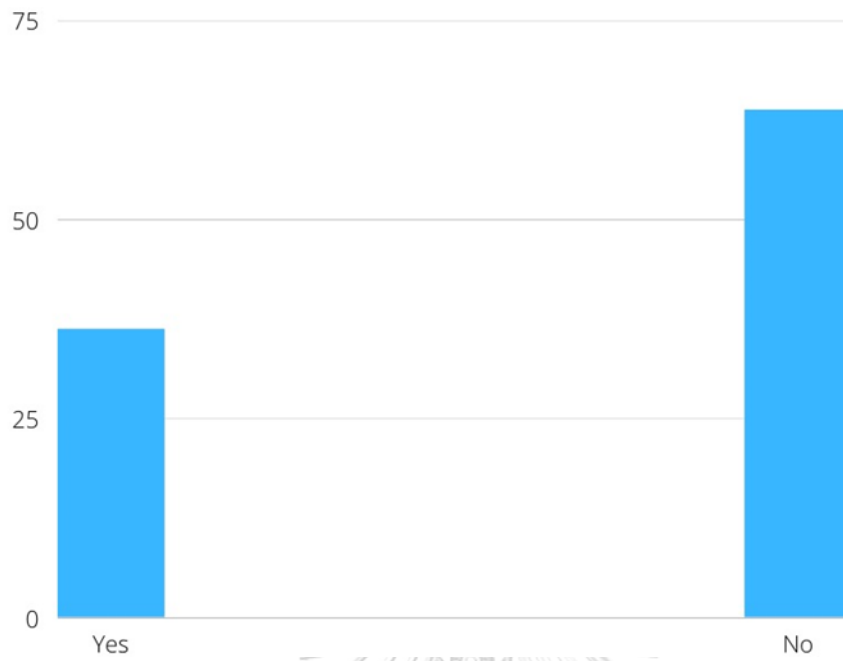


Figure 10: If yes, which country? (Please fill in number)

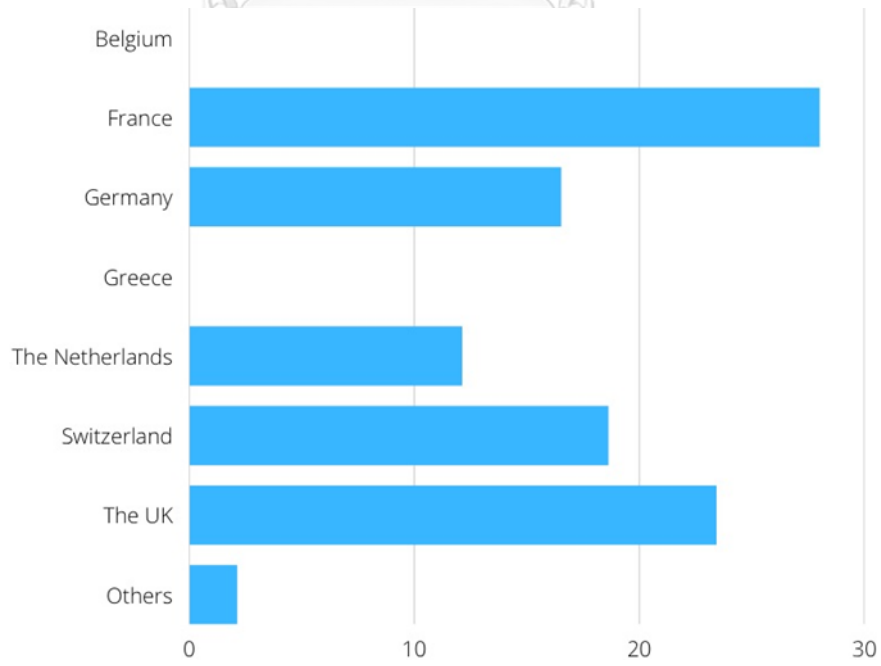


Figure 11: Please give a reason why you went to that country?

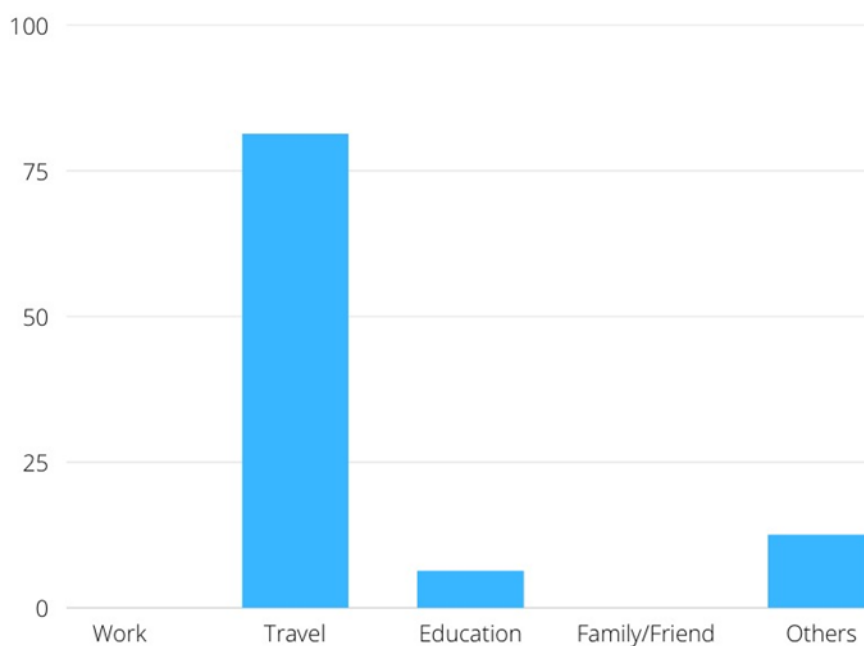


Figure 12: If you have never been to Europe, which country would you like to visit the most? (Please fill in number)

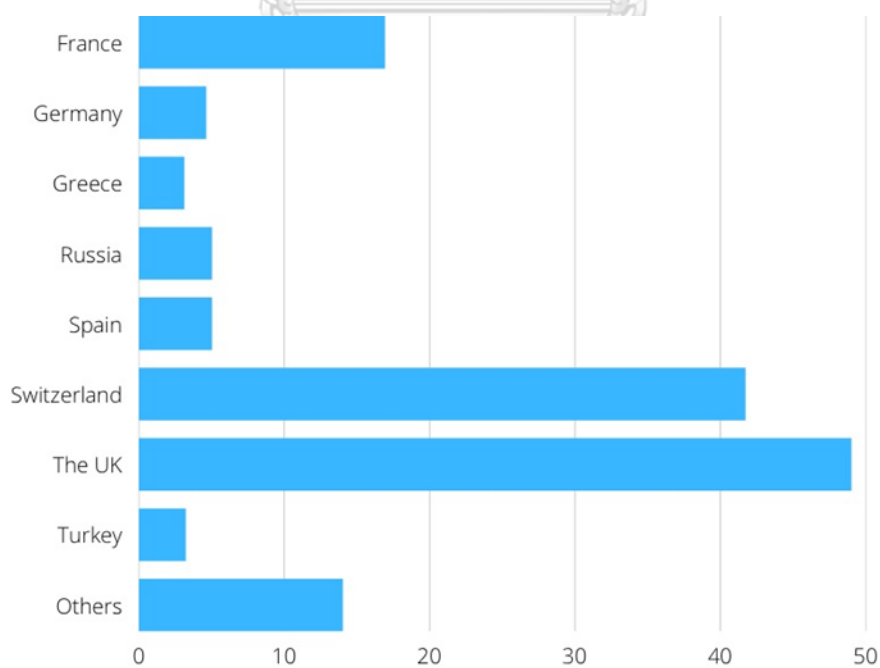


Figure 13: Please give a reason why would you like to visit that country?

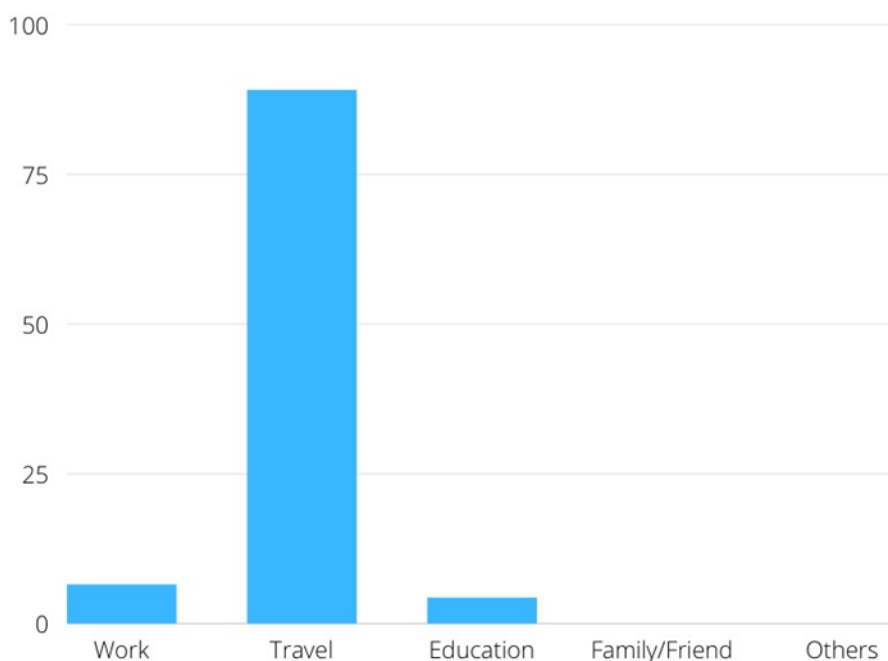


Figure 14: Which country would you like to settle if you need to permanently live in Europe? (Please fill in number)

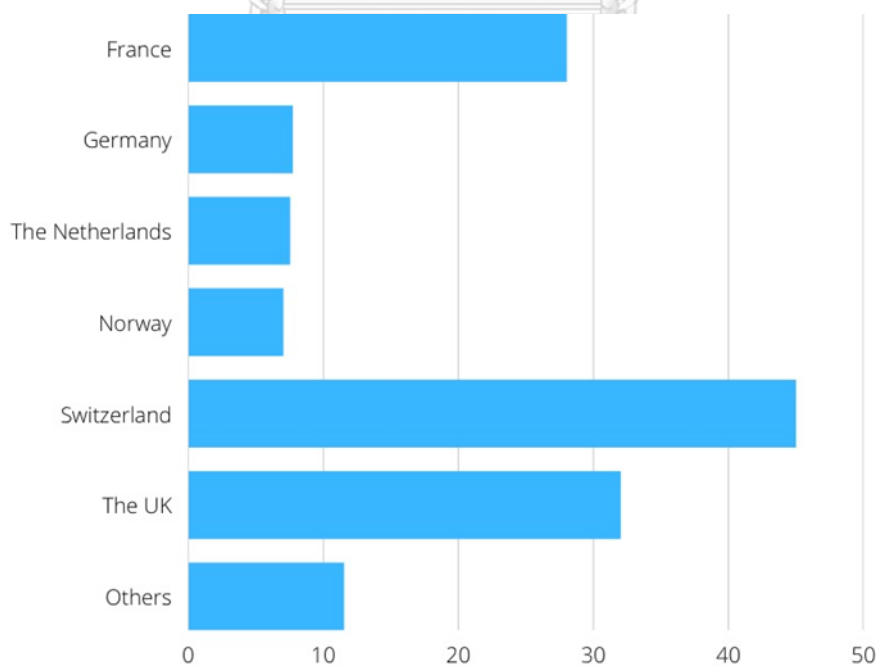


Figure 15: Please give a reason why would you like to live in that country?

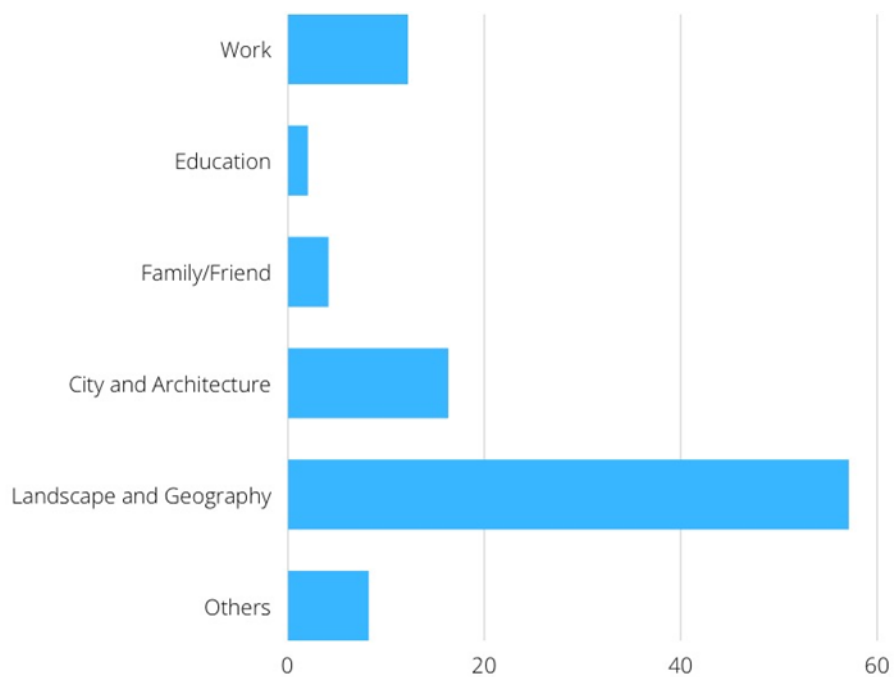


Figure 16: Do you know which European nation first came to Thailand (Siam)?

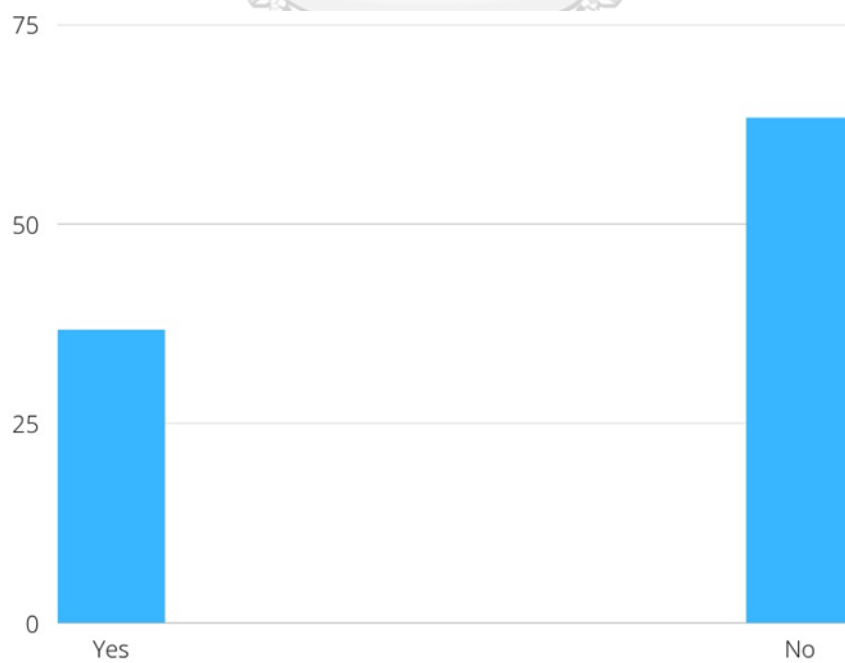


Figure 17: In “Love Destiny” (Thai TV drama), they broadcast many scenes about the Europeans, such as European lords in Siam Royal Household and the creation of Thai dessert from half European lady, Maria Guyomar de Pinha. Do those scenes make you interested more in Europe?

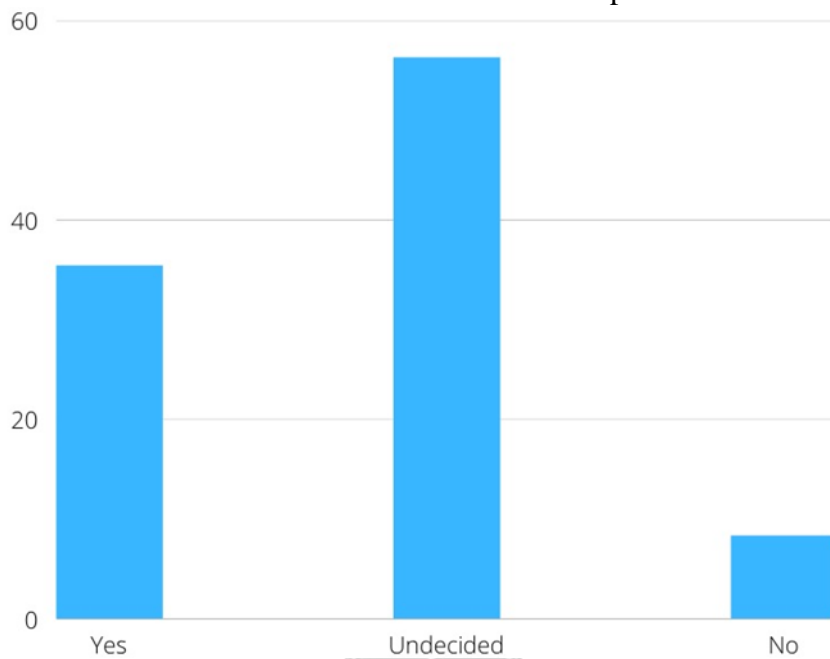


Figure 18: How well do you know Europe?

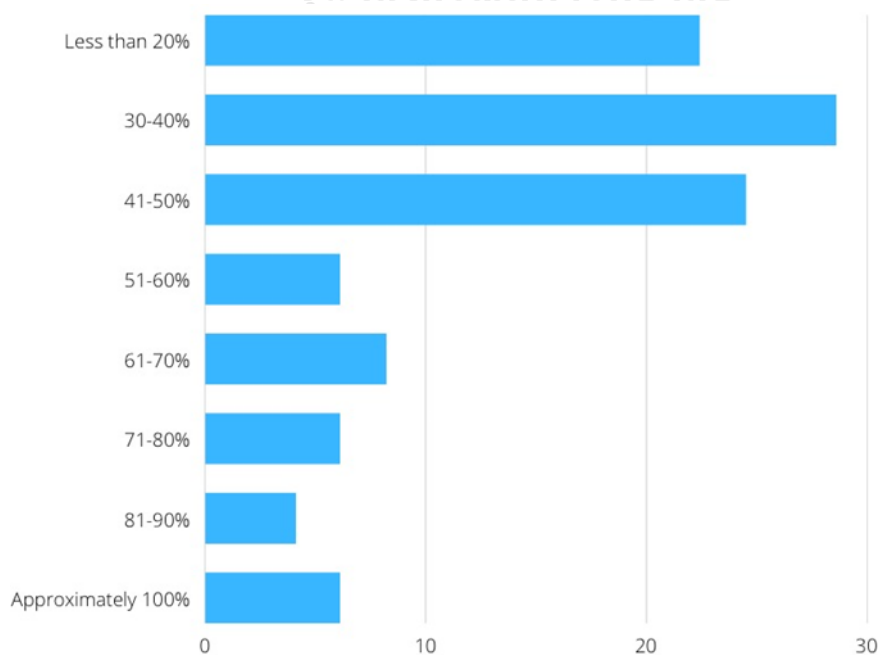
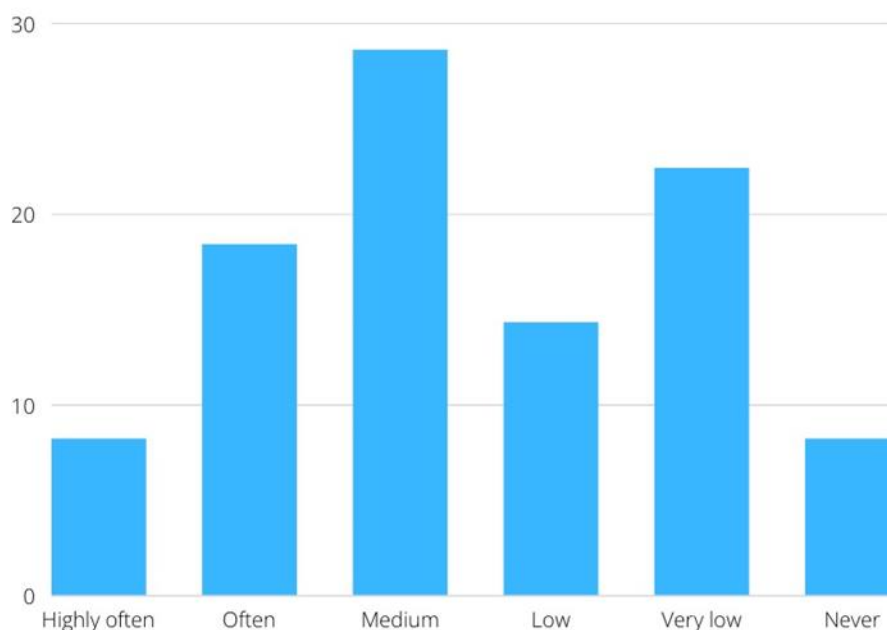




Figure 19: How often you have a conversation about Europe?



### Summary

The survey results show that 97.9 percent know Europe but only 78.7 percent of them like the continent. There are 21.3 percent feels “Moderate” and none of them dislike. Nevertheless, the chart shows that a minority of respondents have been to Europe, 37 percent. This evidently that respondents have positive picture about Europe even though some respondents have never been there before. The United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland received the top votes for “The first country that come up to your mind when think of Europe”. Unsurprisingly, the United Kingdom is the highest with 50 percent of voters agree that it represent Europe the most. While Denmark and Finland are the first runner up. Only a few percent voted for Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Kosovo, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Monaco, Slovakia, Slovenia, etc. Order of Malta is the only choice that no one selected. It’s clear that powerful, rich and famous tourist destination are popular among respondents. Travelling to Europe is always the selection for Thai because we’re going to explore new places where we can spot the different between Thailand, either weather and culture. Some vlogger choose to have Europe as their first trip abroad instead of Southeast Asia countries. This is why the charts says that up to 81.3 percent voted for “Travel” for the reason of going to Europe. “Education” took place for 6.3 percent while

others got 12.5 percent. None of them picked “Work” and “Family and Friend”. Similarly, 88.9 percent wishes to stopover in Europe if they have a chance with the passion that they would like to “Travel”, “Work” and “Study” there. Travel duration is around 2-4 weeks on the whole. It's easily for everyone to fall into the city. What if they need to settle and continue their life there? The result clarifies that Thais love beautiful nature. “Switzerland” gained 36.2 percent while 12.8 percent went to “the United Kingdom”. “The Netherlands” ran third place for life-long living destination. 58.4 percent said they prefer to live in those states because of their “Landscape and Geography”, more than half of the respondent prefer to live in a pleasing environment. Around 16.7 percent went for “City and Architecture” and 12.5 percent for “Work”. As 48.9 percent think “City and architecture” is the prominent point of Europe following by “Landscape and geography and “History”.

It's normal for Thai upper class to send their children off to Europe for education, however, only 2.1 percent choose “Educational system” as a unique point of Europe. “Leader” and “Royal family” are not at their first thought at all. “Language” is the most attractive culture where English, French and Spanish classes are introduced in countless schools and universities in Thailand. Food can draw people from thousand miles away, as can be prove in this case, 29.8 percent spend all their vote for “Cuisine”. European food is famous for its rich in taste and ingredient. We can find European restaurant at every high-end shopping mall in Bangkok. At the same time, “Others” got 21.3 percent, some respondents say “Football” and “Art” are also two impressive cultures of Europe while “Costume” shared 10.6 percent of the total pie chart.

Section 1 provided questions about respondents' broad knowledge and interest in Europe. Europe and Asia trade since 15th - 16th 5. For Thailand (Siam), Portugal is the first nation who arrived here since the 16th century. About 64.6 percent had no clue on which Europe country first came to Thailand. In 2018, “Love Destiny (บุพเพสันนิวาส)”, Thai drama series, broadcast story of European lord in Siam Royal House. More than half of respondents say they feel “Moderate” while other 36.2 percent feel this TV drama attract their attention to Europe after watching those scenes. These answers prove that TV drama doesn't have much effect on people's perception. It's a heavy task to influence them through scene and screen.

Most of all, 29.2 percent said they think they know Europe for “21-30%”. People with “Less than 20% ” and “Approximately 41-50% ” are accounted for 22.9 percent each. Thai loves chit-chat as we talk from the sunrise until the sunset. Europe topic is “Very often” include in their conversation for 8 percent, in which similar to

“Never”. 29.2 percent mention Europe in their verbal dialogue in “Moderate” level and 22.9 percent say “Very low”, around 15 percent for “Often” and “Low”.



## CHAPTER 4

### Thai's perceptions of the relationship between Europe and Thailand

Europe is one of the longest region that Thailand exchange cooperation. Both sides have strong bond in trading until today. Goods and services exchanging with Europe become another asset for Thailand because we have been growing goods and services trade-off. This section asking for a conclusion of Thai's perceptions on the relationship between Europe and Thailand in many aspects.

Figure 20: Do you think Europe is different from Thailand?

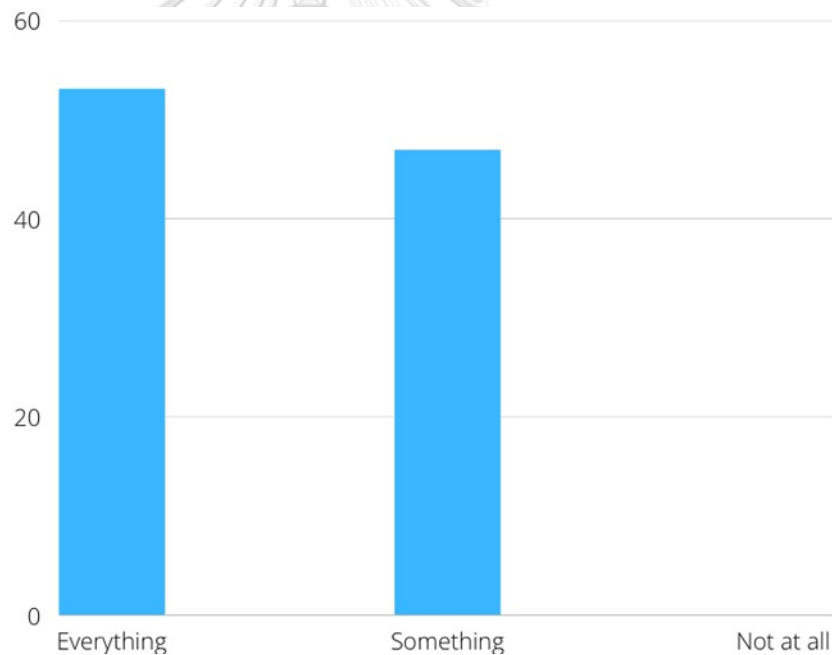


Figure 21: How different between Europe and Thailand's economy?

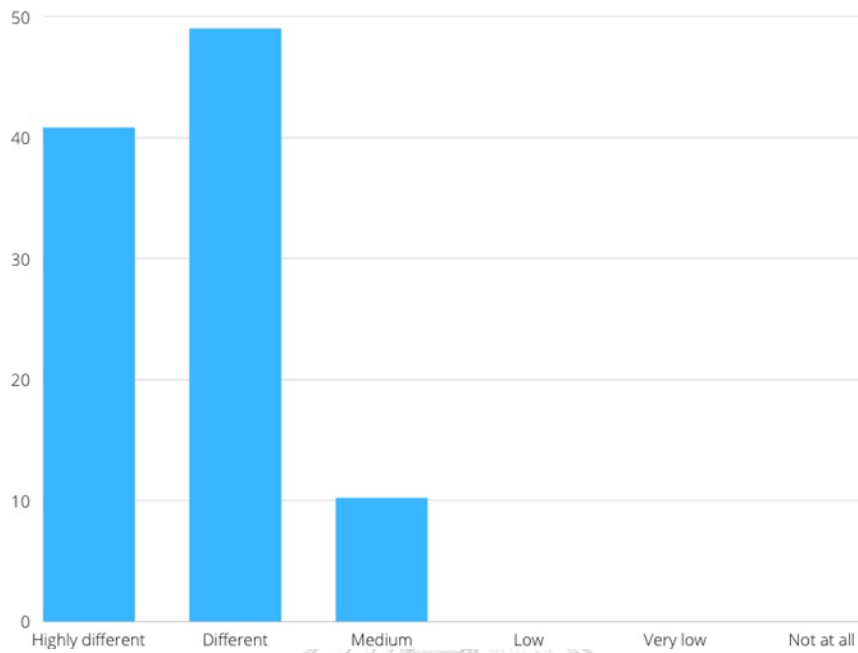


Figure 22: How different between Europe and Thailand's politic?

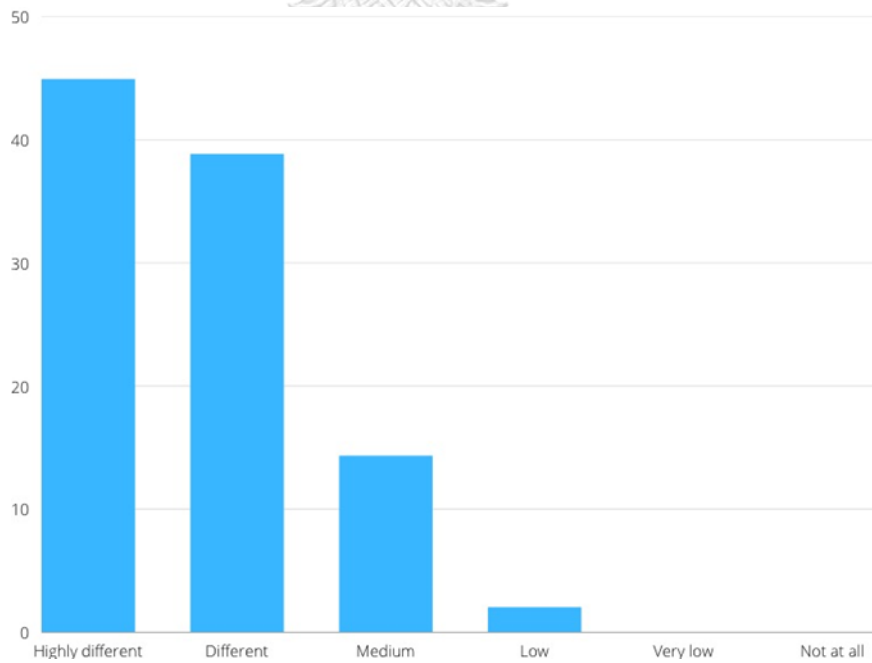


Figure 23: How different between Europe and Thailand's society?

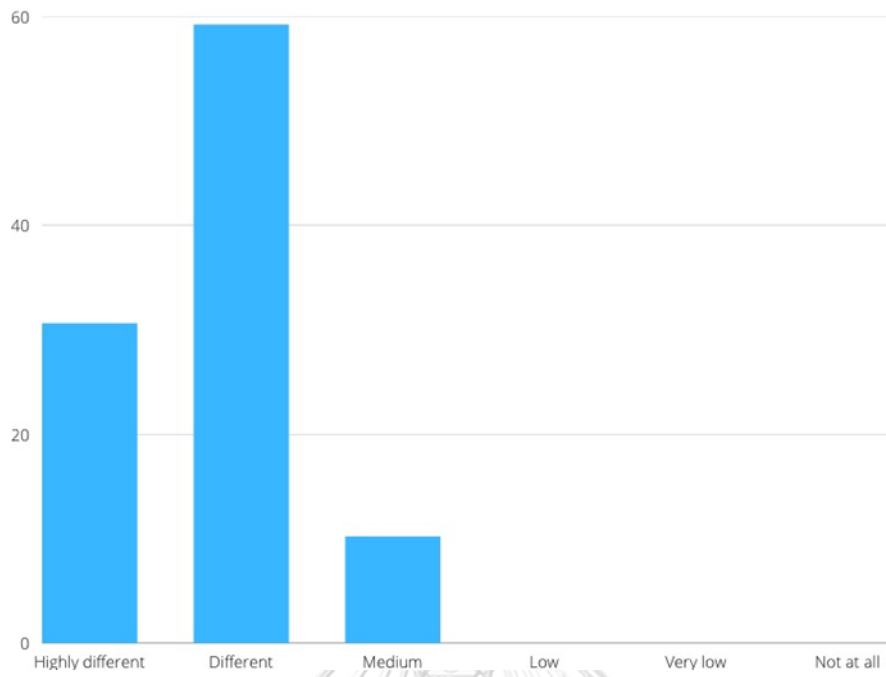


Figure 24: In which filed is Europe a good role model for Thailand?

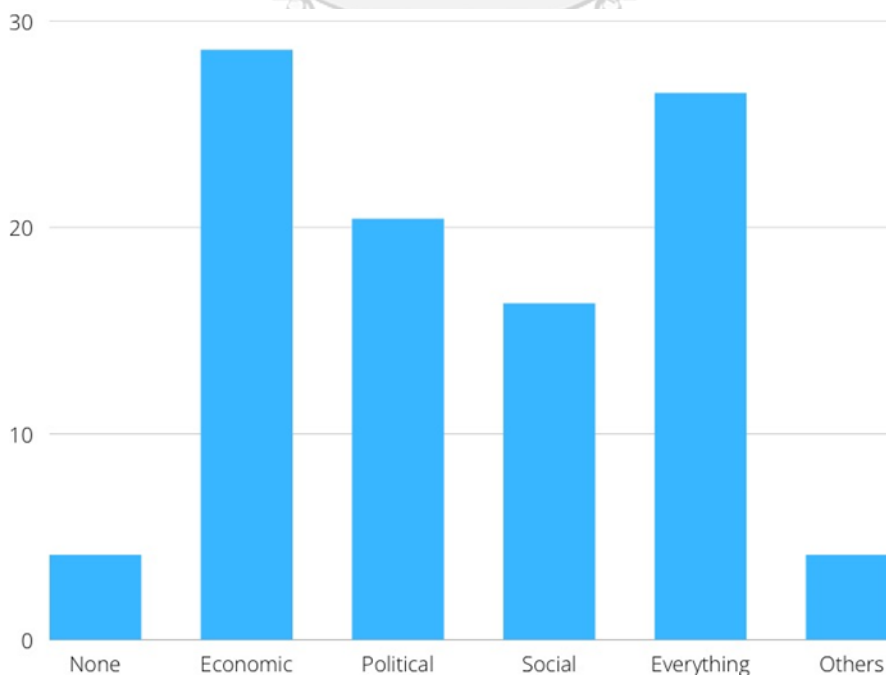


Figure 25: Is Europe a good ally of Thailand?

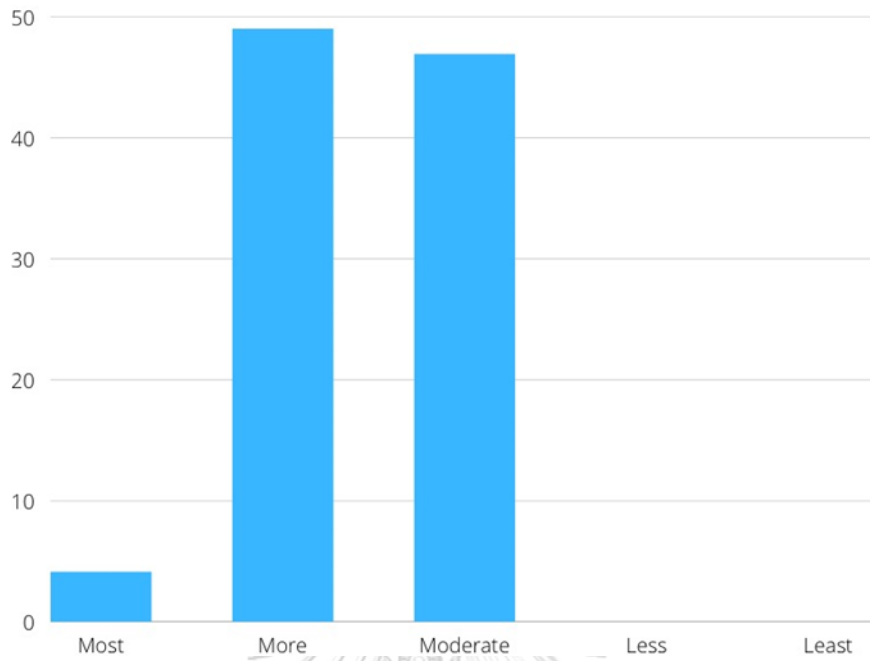


Figure 26: Which country has the closest diplomatic relationship with Thailand?  
(Please fill in number)

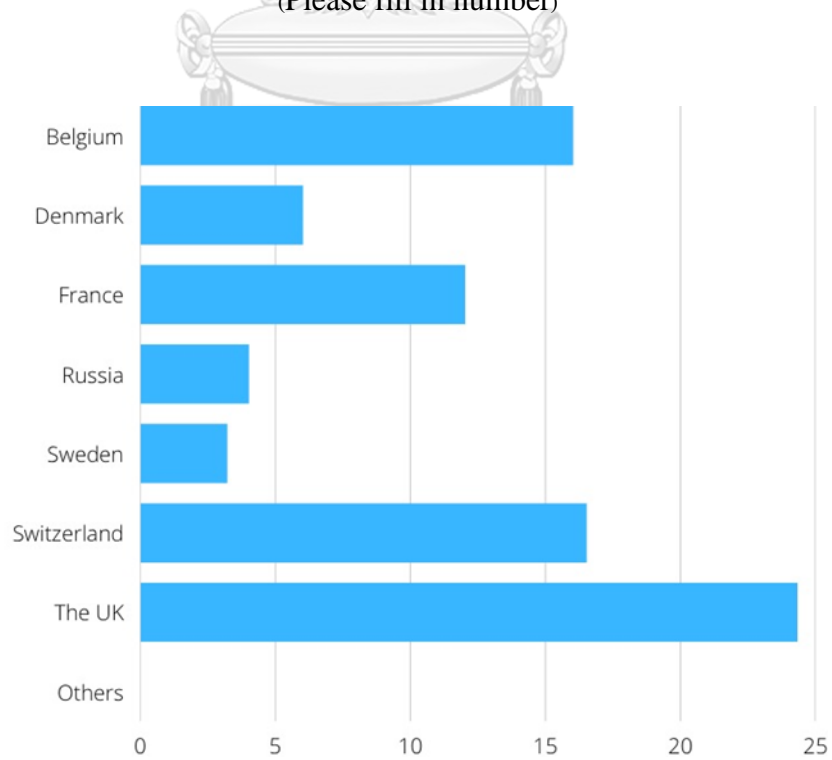


Figure 27: Which country has the most distant relationship with Thailand? (Please fill in number)

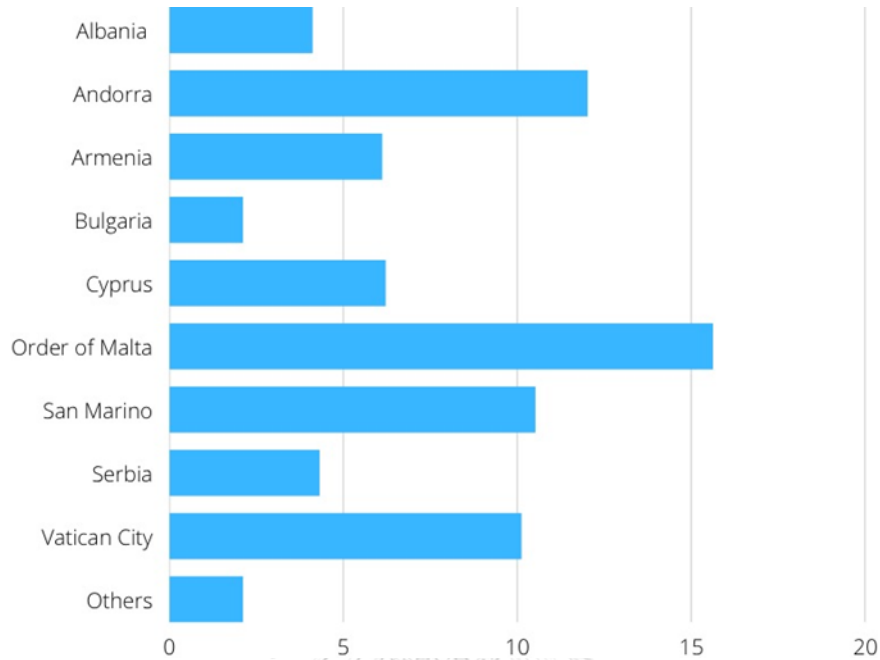


Figure 28: Which country has the closest relationship with Thai (in people-to-people relation)? (Please fill in number)

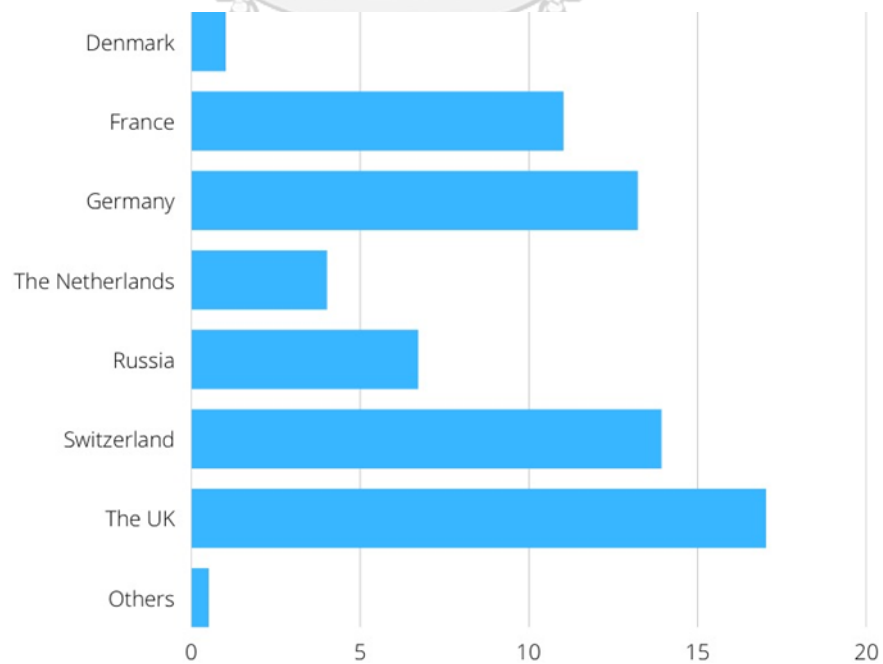




Figure 29: Which people-to-people level do the Europeans and Thai are connected?

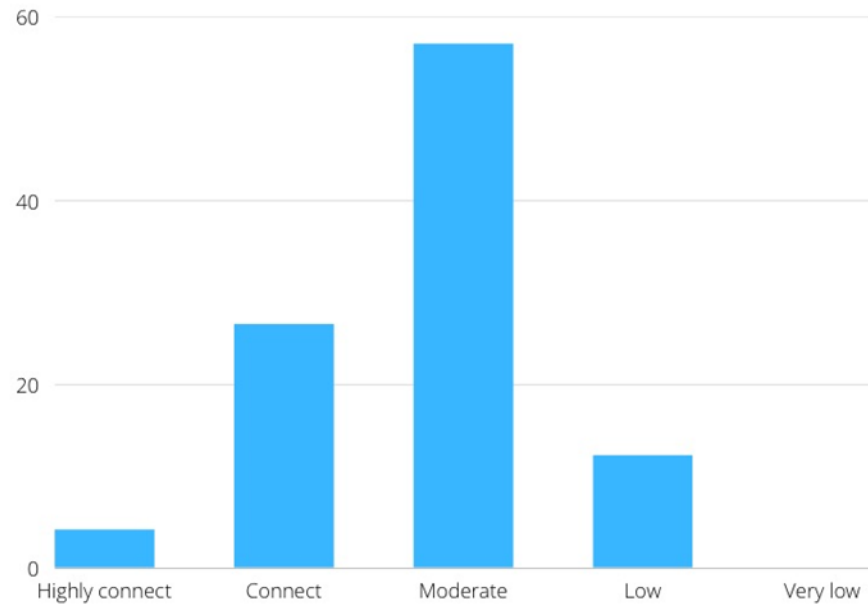


Figure 30: Do you think Thai academy should teach about Europe to student or not?

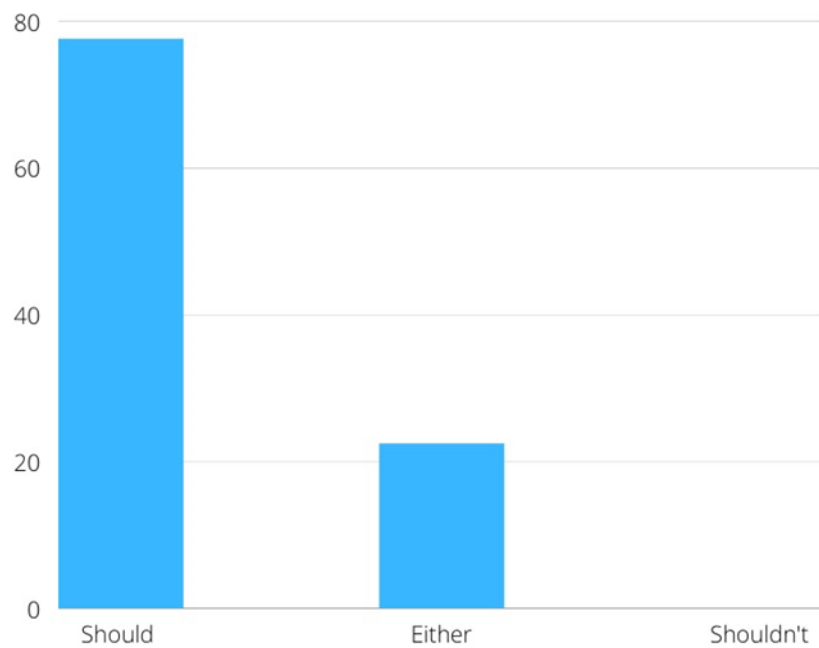


Figure 31: Which is the characteristic of (most) European in your perspective?

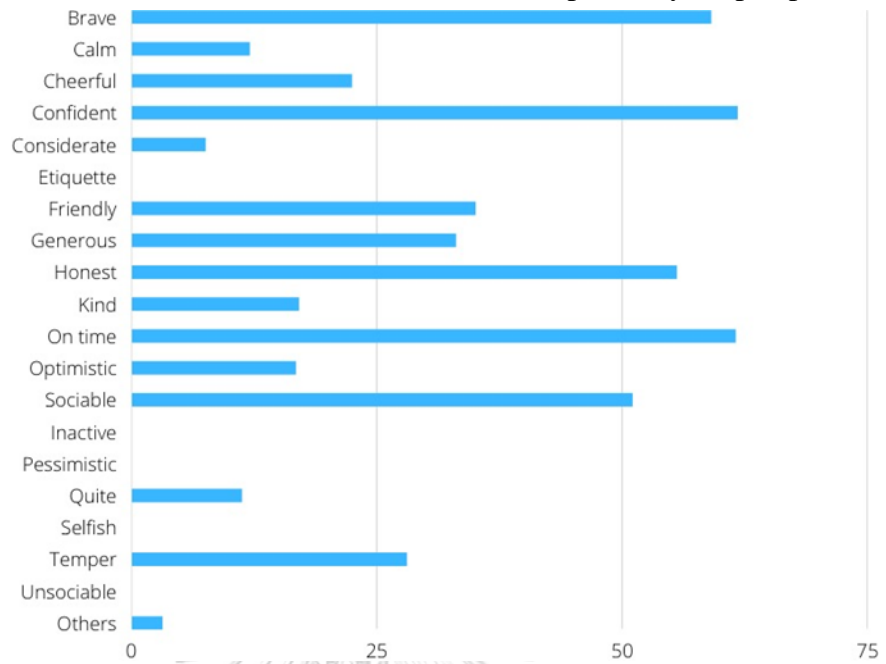


Figure 32: Which is the characteristic of (most) Thai from (most) European's side, in your perspective?

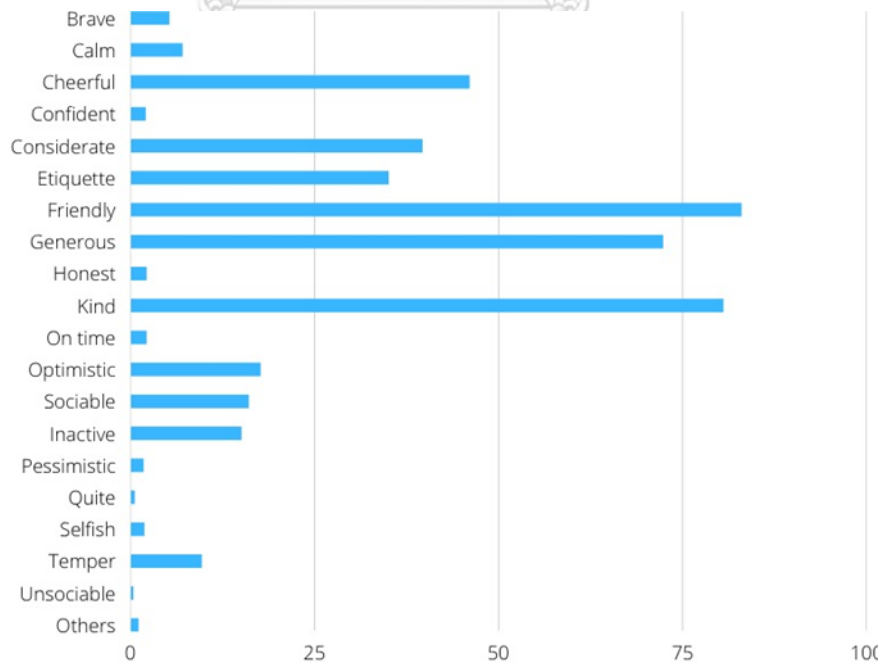
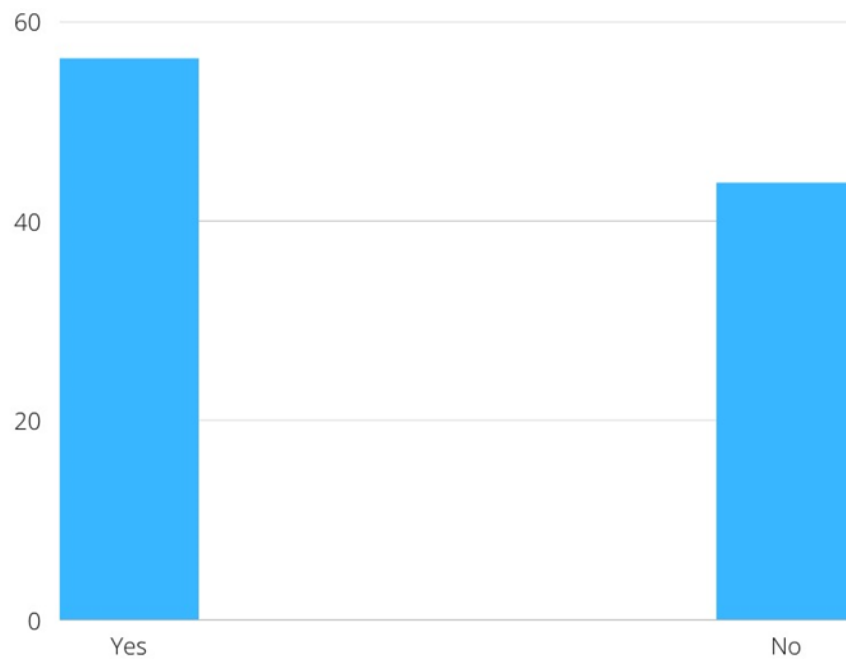


Figure 33: Do you have European relatives/ friends?



### Summary

Respondents in the survey were asked to think about the relationship between Europe and Thailand. Specifically, individuals were asked about the differences, and stereotypes. The first question asking whether they think Europe and Thailand are different? All of them think they are, however, 52.1 percent pick different in “Everything” while 47.9 percent say “Yes, but something”. This means that 100 percent of respondents think the pair is different in all square. The questions for the difference divided into three fields, economic, politic and social. For economic, 42 percent think it’s “Different”, 42 percent say it’s “Highly Different” and the others assume it’s “Moderate”. The majority of them think politic is “Highly Different”, with 43.8 percent, following with “Different” for 39.6 percent. From many people’s point of view, “Social” is the most difference compare to other groups, it got 60.4 percent votes for “Different”. 29.3 percent think it’s “Highly different” and only 10.4 percent said it’s “Moderate”. The survey results show that Thai think Europe and Thailand are different in these three major parts. Around 29.2 percent claimed that Europe is a good role model for Thailand in “Economic”, despite a growing and strong Europe’s economy. Even though everyone believe that Europe and Thailand are different but they are also accept the fact that Europe is a good role model for Thailand. Among Thais, almost half view the relationship as being a good ally, 47.9 percent for “More” or “Moderate”.

4.2 percent think Europe is the best (“Most”) ally for Thailand. Respondents in Thailand were by and large positive about this relationship. Comparatively 23.9 percent individuals presume “the United Kingdom” as the closest ally of Thailand while 17.4 selected “France” and 14.9 percent went for “Germany”. Only about a few percent of the sample fell into other countries. On the other hand, “Order of Malta” has the most distant relationship with Thailand in most opinions. Andorra, San Marino, and Vatican City share the same average for 10.9 percent. It’s important to identify which country they think has the closest people-to-people relationship with Thailand because it shows that country is successful in social diplomatic. The distribution of responses shows that “the United Kingdom” receive the highest votes, 34 percent. “France” and “Germany” got around 8.5 and 6.4 percent. Nevertheless, the connection between people seems to be relatively low. 58.3 percent think the connection of people is at “Moderate”. 10.4 percent assumes that it’s “Low”. Hence, 31.1 percent believe that it’s above “Moderate” connection. The perceptions to connection seems to stand in between close and far. The results prove that we know each other but we are not close friends. In general, 79.2 percent support school to teach student about Europe and the Europeans.

The proportion of the difference between Europe and Thailand is high. The next two questions asking Thais to select the characteristic of the Europeans and what do they think the Europeans perceive Thais, both positive and negative images. For Thais, 61.7 percent think the Europeans are “On time” and “Confident”. 59.6 percent said they are “Assertive” and 55.3 said they are “Forthright”. Around 35 percent think they are “Friendly” and “Etiquette”. The majority of the chart is positive, However, 17 percent think the Europeans are “Temper” and “Quiet”. For all that, Thais assume that the European see them as “Friendly” and “Kind” for 83.3 and 81.3 percent. Most selected are “Calm”, “Lively”, “Generous”, “Etiquette” and “Considerate”. On the other hand, at negative characters, the chart shows that they assume that the Europeans think Thai is not “On time”, not “Forthright” and not “Confident”. They are also “Inactive”, “Selfish”, “Temper” and none for “Quiet”. It becomes apparent that the charts (Graph 12 and Graph 13) tell how different between image from respondents to the Europeans and how respondents assume the European though on Thai. All in all, only 55.3 percent have European relatives and friends. Hence, the chart can be changed if other half of respondents connect with the Europeans in person.

## CHAPTER 5

### Thai's perceptions of the European Union

The European Union (the EU) and Thailand are partnership which both sides need to stay connect and continue prospering the cooperation and collaboration. The EU has been following its policy to distribute their norms into other places. Thailand is another focus because we are the hub and have influence over ASEAN in some areas. The EU and Thailand have numerous agreements on development and trade. This section is going to see how well Thais know the EU and at which degree. Will they know which field the EU is important to Europe and is will the EU become the rising power for the global community in their point of view?

Figure 34: Do you know “the European Union (the EU)”?

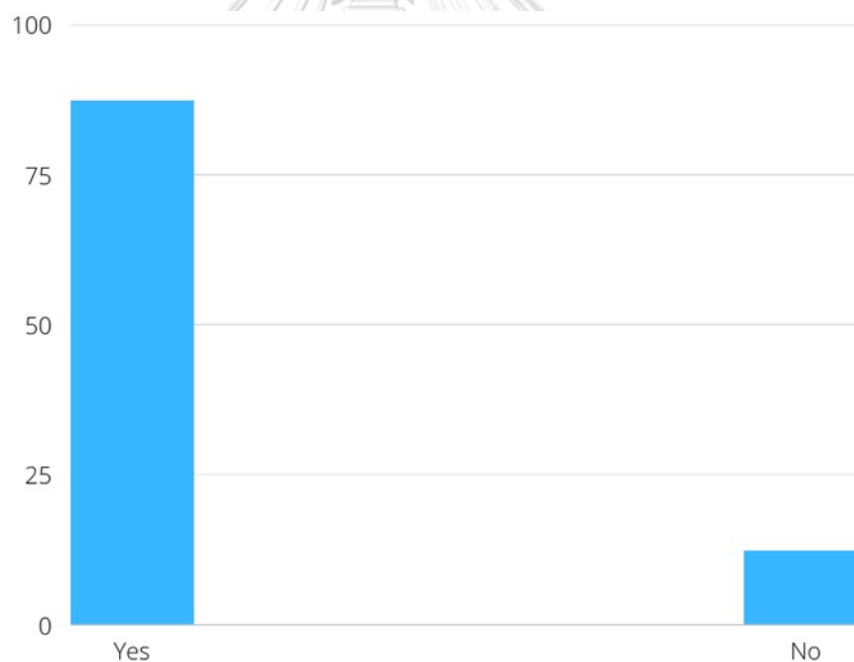


Figure 35: If not, what do you think is the European Union?

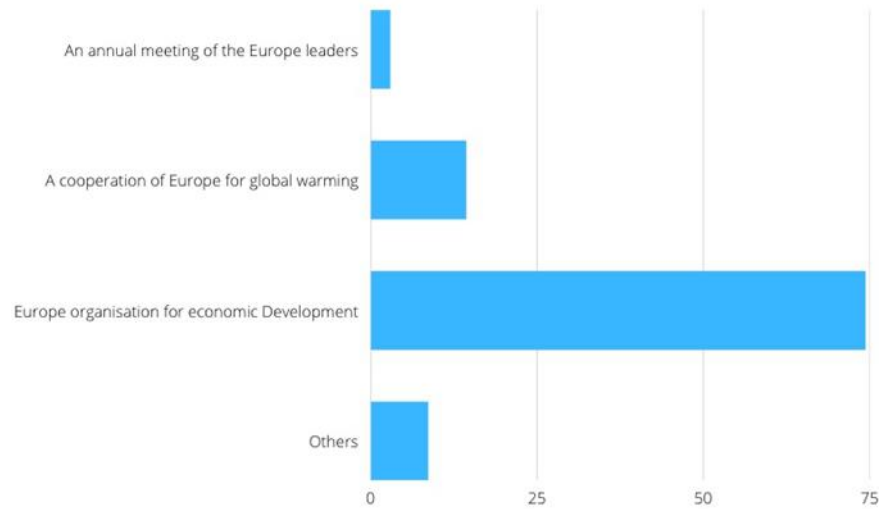


Figure 36: If yes, do you know the EU is an integration of 27 Europe Member States aiming for better economic, politic and society for the Member States. They also need to ratify for the common law?

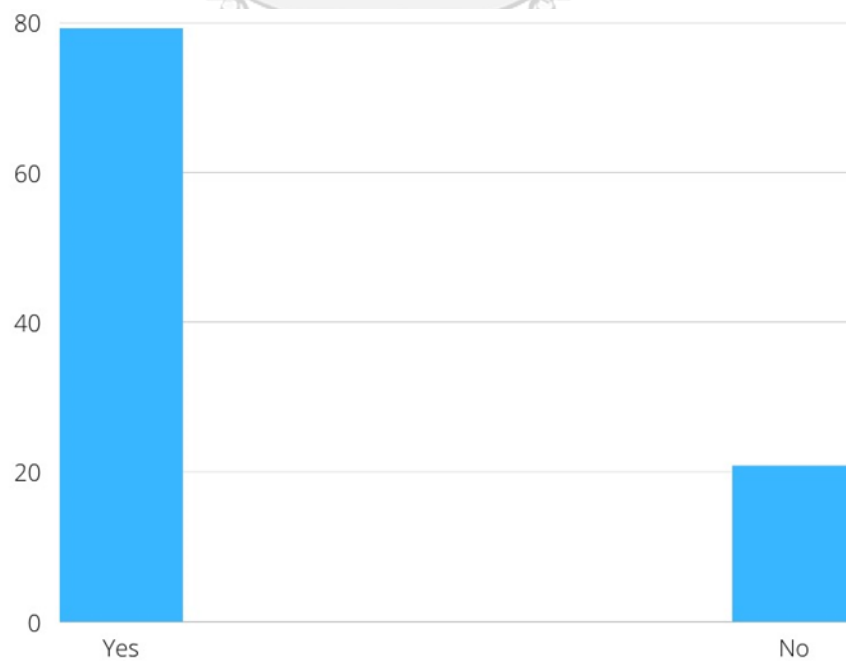


Figure 37: Which level does the EU important to Europe?

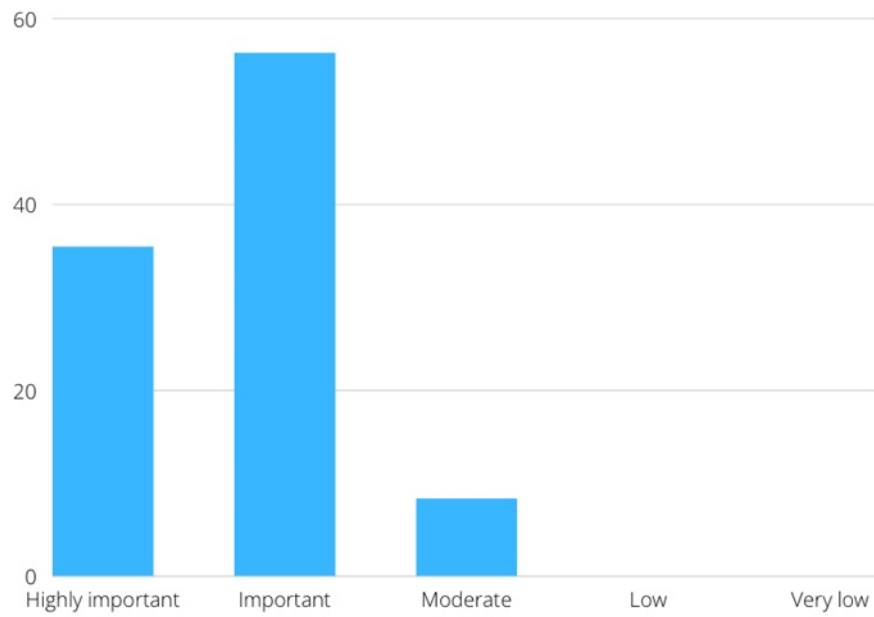


Figure 38: Which field does the EU most important to Europe?

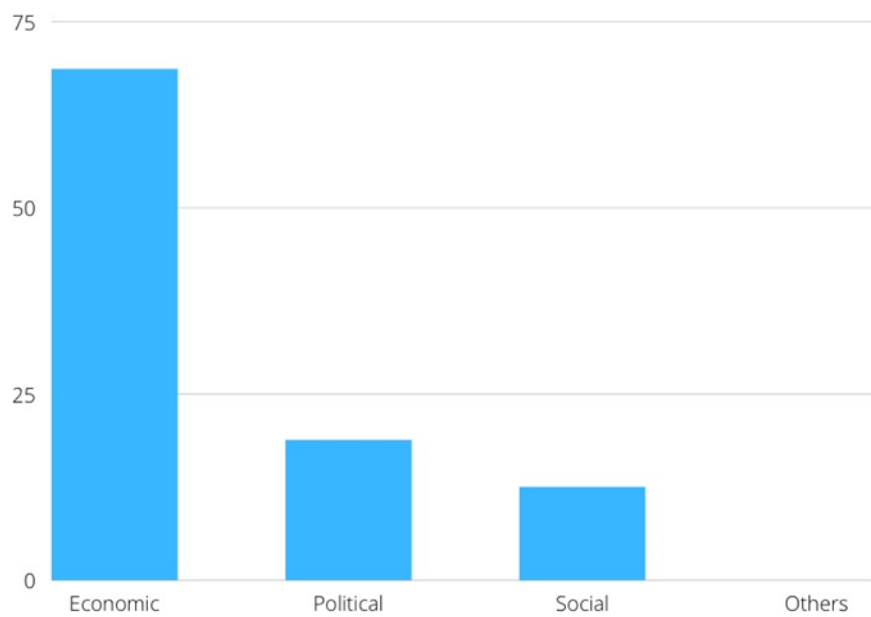


Figure 39: Which level does the EU influence to international community?

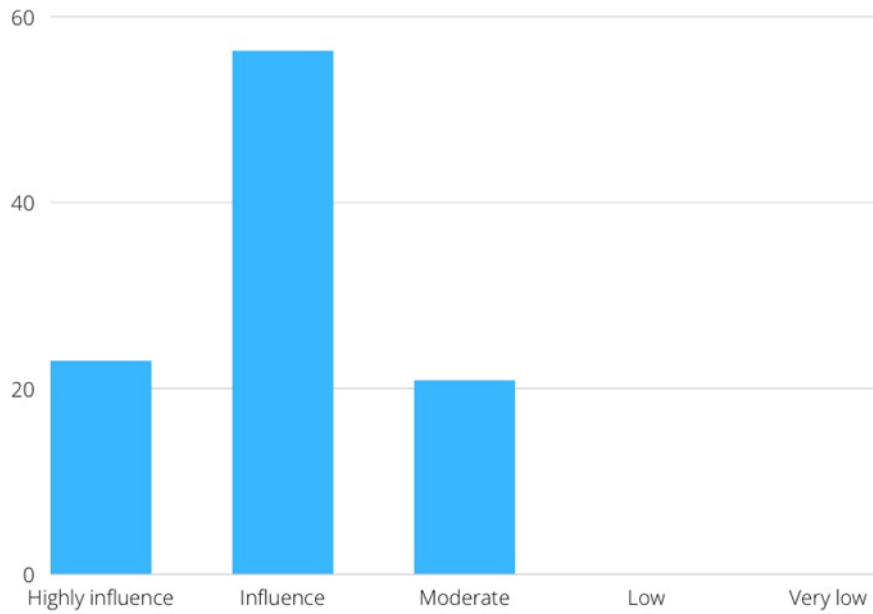


Figure 40: Which field does the EU most influence in international community?

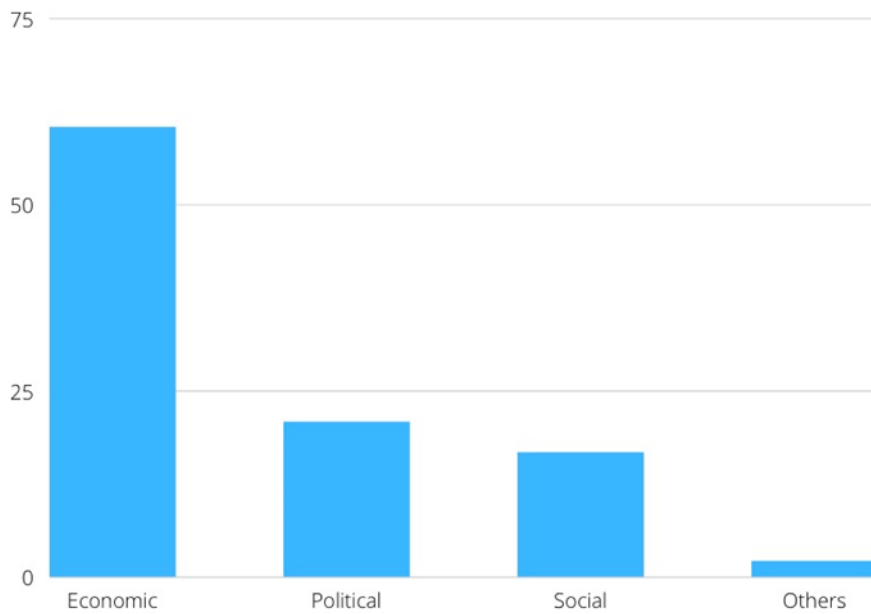




Figure 41: Which continent has the closest relationship with the EU?

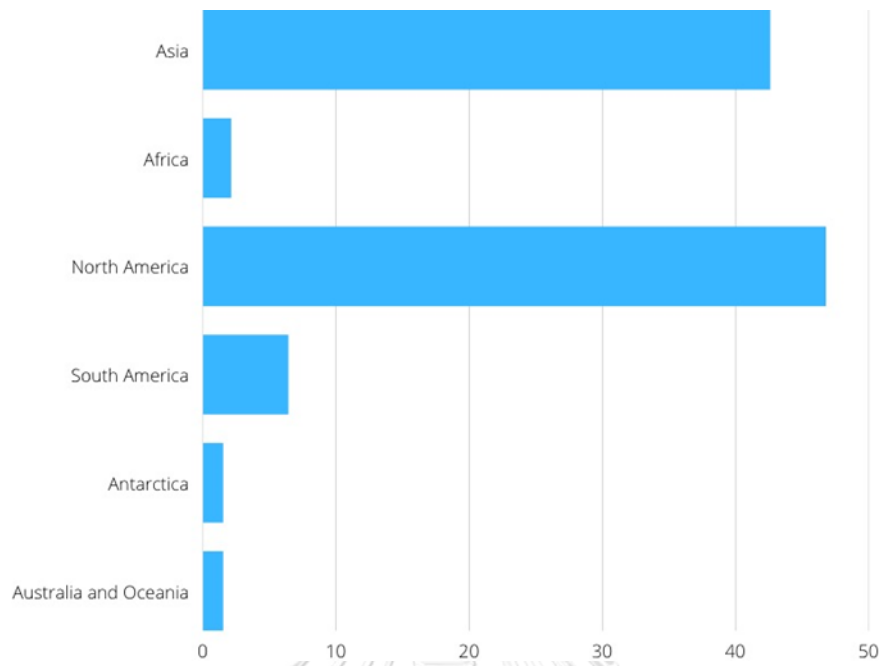


Figure 42: Which continent has the most distant relationship with the EU?

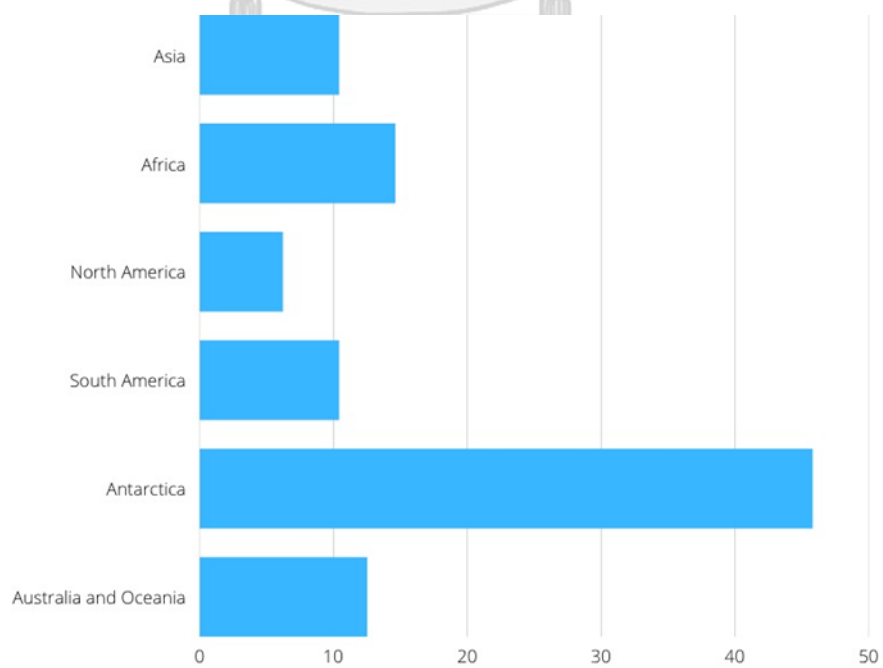


Figure 43: How well do you know the EU?

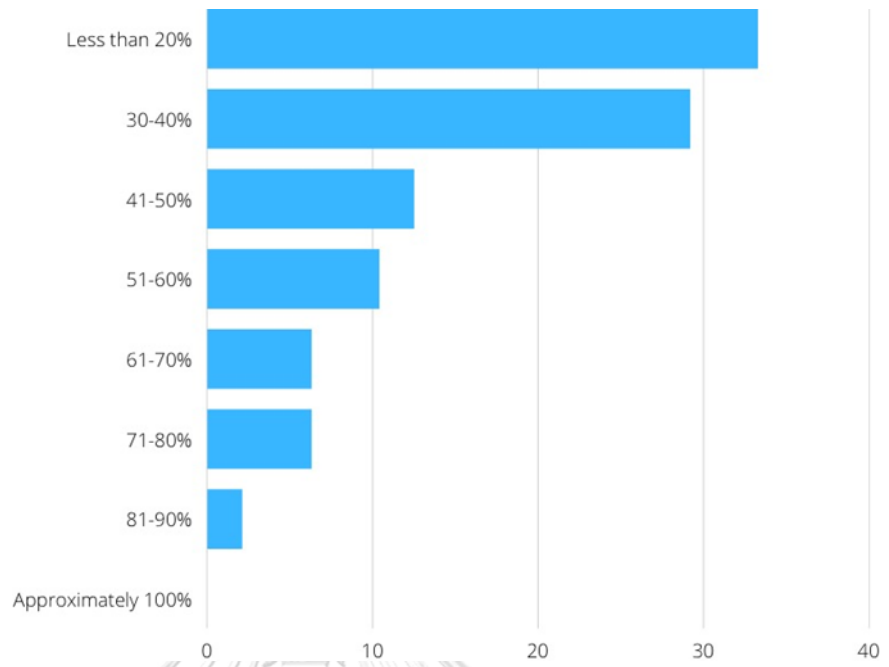


Figure 44: Have you ever studies about the EU at school?

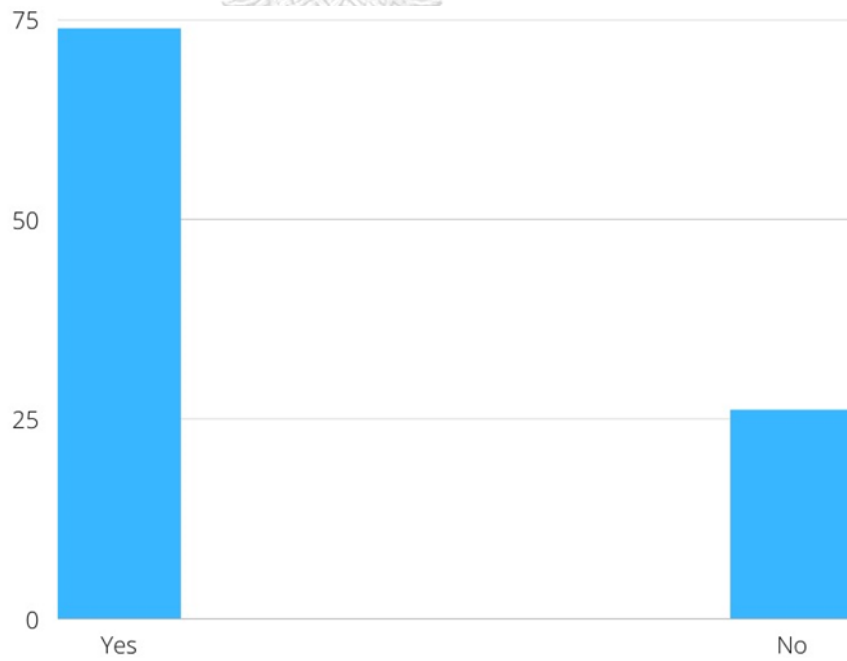


Figure 45: How much does the EU important to Russia-Ukraine war?

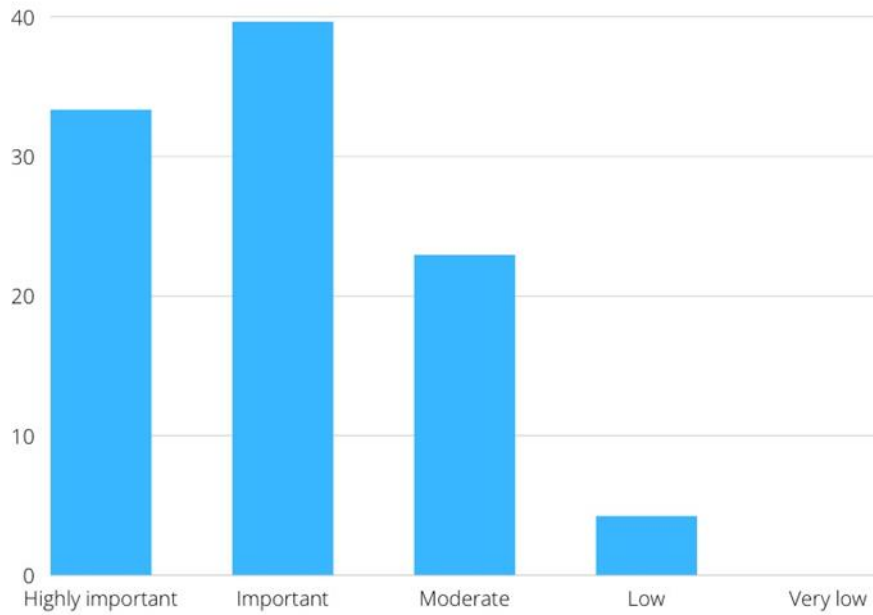


Figure 46: Which role does the EU has been taking in Russia-Ukraine war?

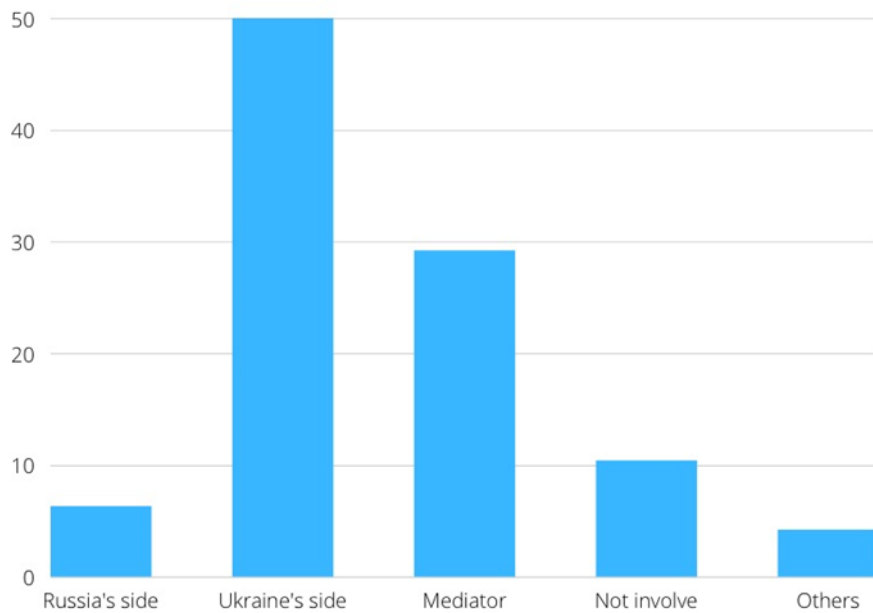


Figure 47: Will the EU become another super power after the USA and China?

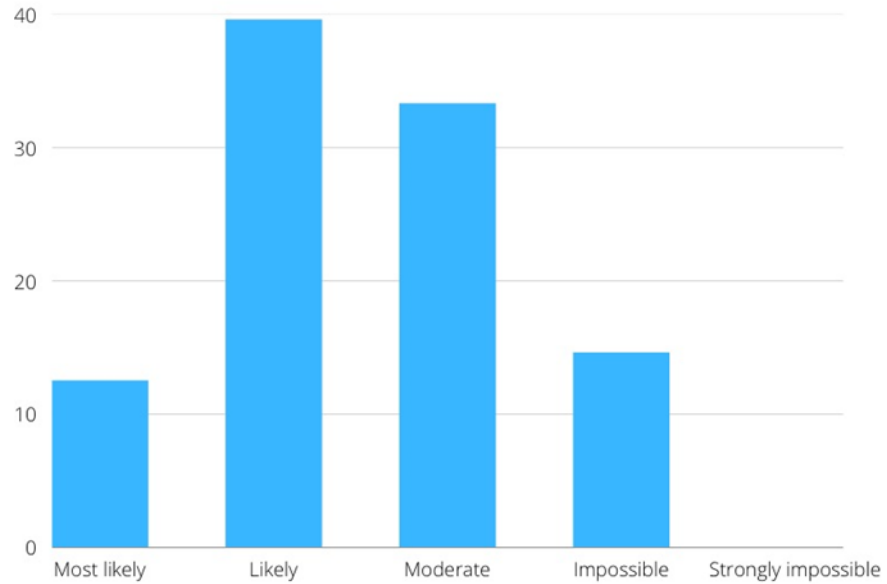


Figure 48: Which level do the EU and Thailand trade?

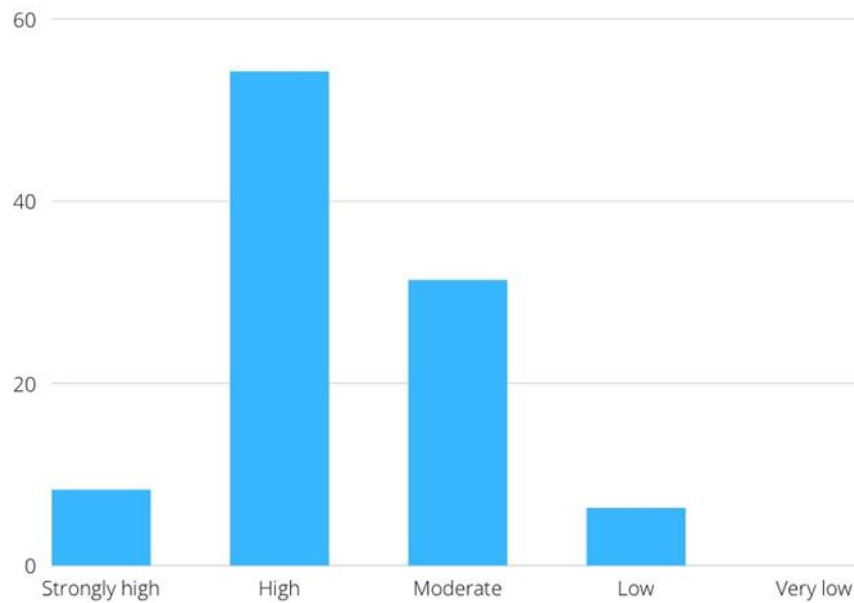


Figure 49: Which of the most “Import product” from the EU Members to Thailand?

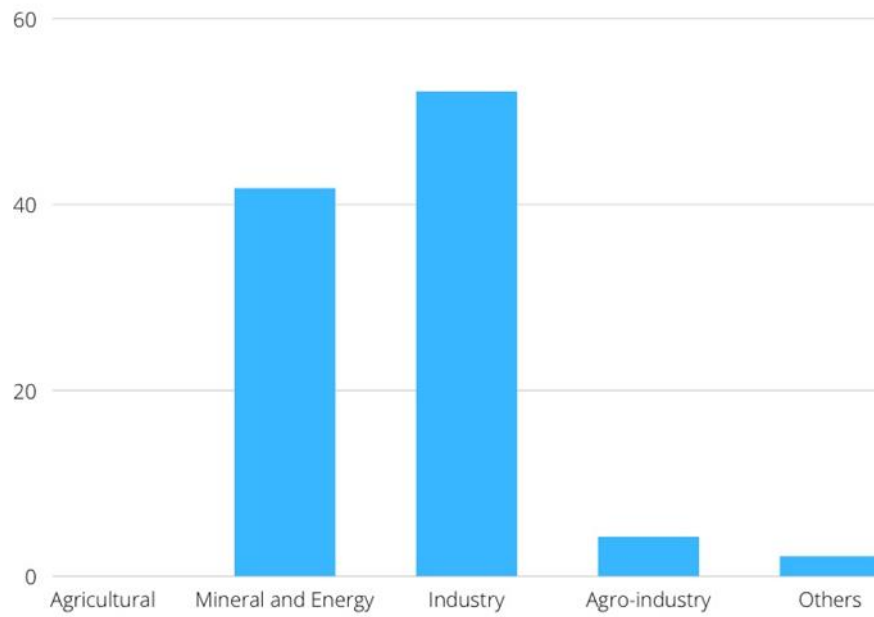


Figure 50: Which of the most “Export product” from the EU Members to Thailand?

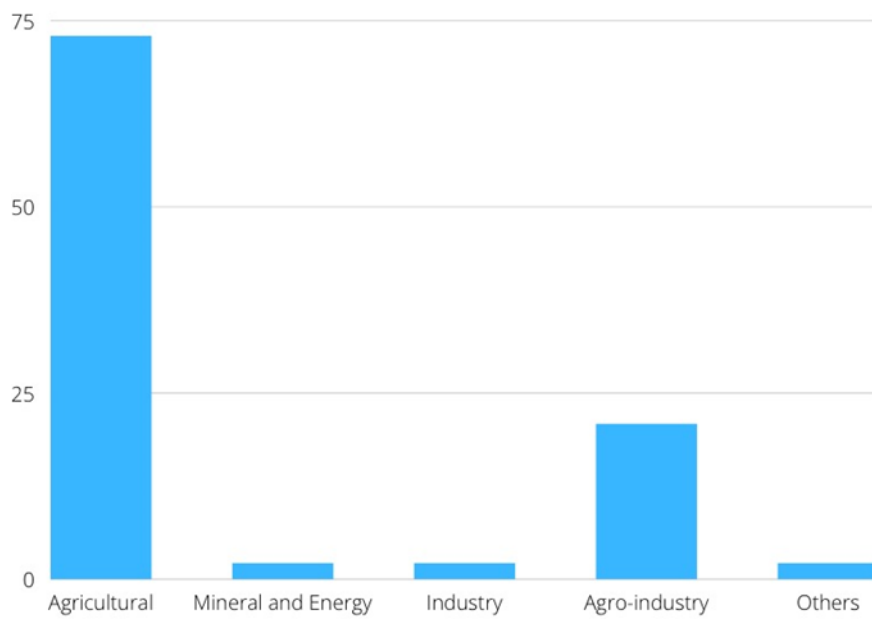


Figure 51: Is there “European Delegation” to Thailand?

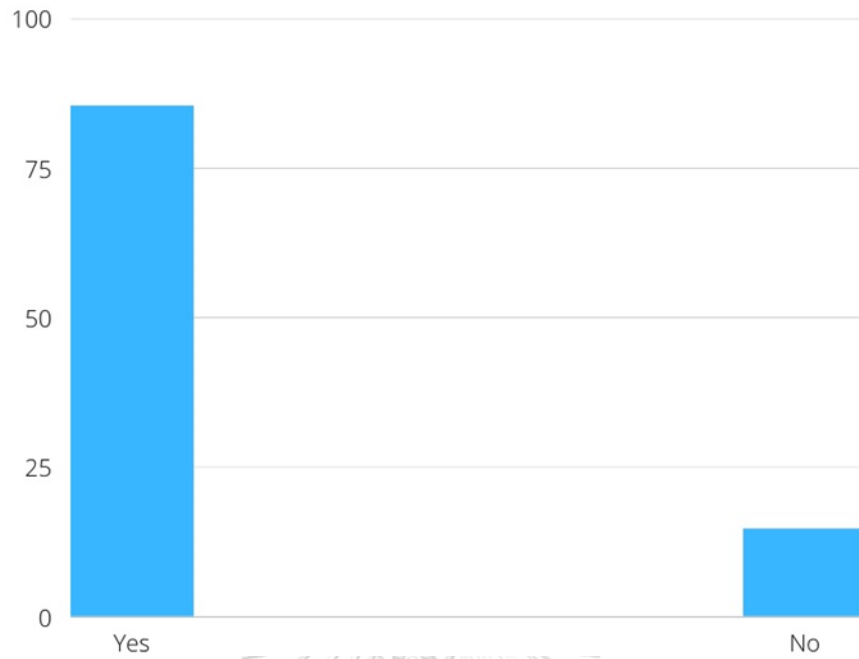
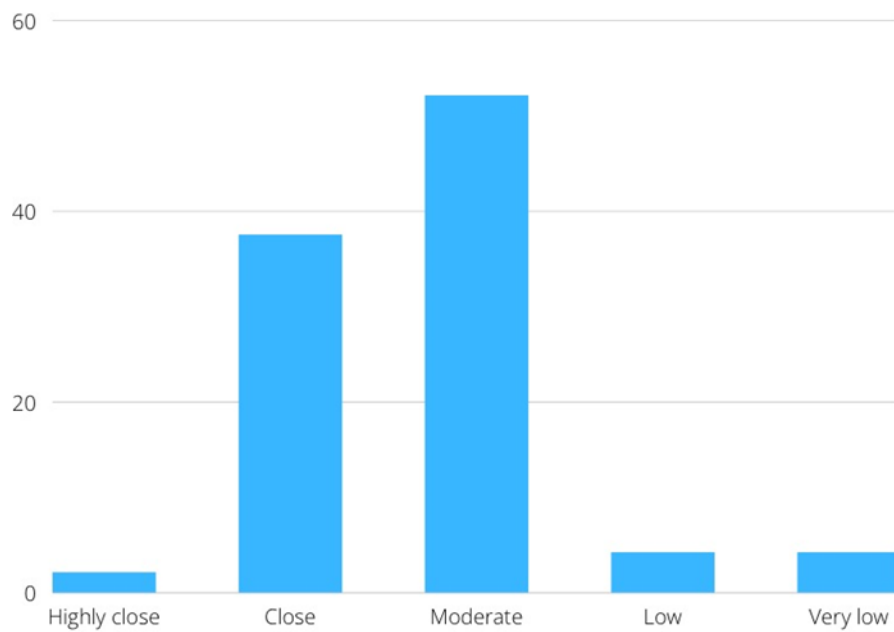


Figure 52: How close between the EU and Thai government relationships?



## Summary

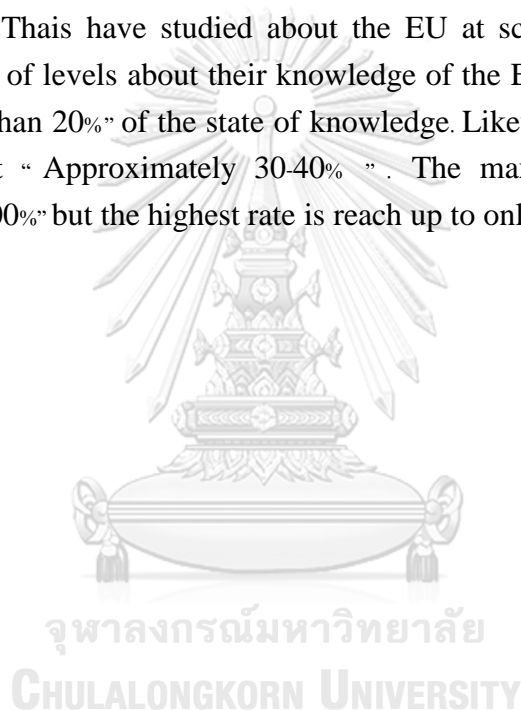
For respondents, the dominant perception of 87.5 percent know the EU. It means that they know the EU but don't know how it functioning. All respondents say the EU is important for Europe, 34 percent for "Highly important" while 8.5 percent went for "Moderate" and none of them picked "Low" and "Very low". It was regarded that 70.2 percent think the EU is there to help generate the economic in the region, which 17 percent for politic and 12.8 percent for social. 57.4 percent say the EU is "Important" to the international stage with 23.4 percent went for "Highly important" and 19.1 percent choose "Moderate". Comparatively 61.7 percent gave that the EU has power and influence over economic the most, following 21.3 percent for politic and 14.9 percent for society. The EU has cooperation with every continent. However, the EU can compare as one giant state, which they have close and gap relationship with other actors. Respondents think the bloc has the closest relationship with North America, 45.7 percent, similarly to Asia, 43.5 percent. On the other hand, they think Antarctica is the most distance ally of the EU. The other six continents shared around 10 - 15 percent.

The EU is under pressure of war between Russia - Ukraine because they play an important role in the issue. Most Respondents know how dominant the EU for this conflict, 31.9 percent say the EU is "Highly important" with another 40.4 percent agree on "Important". 23.4 percent assume it's "Moderate" and 4.3 percent think the EU has "Low" performance. Surprisingly, respondents know that the EU is with Ukraine, 48.9 percent. While 6.4 percent go for Russia. Another unique portion is 29.8 percent think the EU act as "a Mediator". 10.6 percent say they're not taking part because it's not in their attention. 4.3 percent tell that the EU is playing "Others" role. The EU is trying to secure and build up more role in international affairs. The next question demonstrates how successful they are. Respondents of 12.8 percent think the EU is "Most likely" to become another superpower after the United States and China, 31.9 percent say it's "Moderate", there a chance of becoming and not reaching that position. These answers indicate that respondents think the EU take high accountabilities in Europe and world communities, where they trust that the EU has a potential to tackle some problems.

The EU is the fourth trading partner of Thailand for "exports" after ASEAN, the United States and China<sup>6</sup>. A broad 53.2 percent think they are at "High", 31.9 percent for "Moderate", 8.5 percent for "Strongly High" and 6.4 percent for "Low" trading with Thailand. Both sides have been trading in all type of products. It was with respect that respondents think "Industry" hosted the highest share of "Import product" to Thailand for 51.1 percent. 42.6 percent for "Mineral and Energy". On the other side, "Agricultural" is an "Export product" of Thailand that 74.5 percent believe it's the top

export goods, in the time, “Agro-industry” got 19.1 percent. This result shows that Thailand and Europe are different at competitive advantage.

The EU Delegations are working hard to enhance the relationship and engage with local people. Respondents were asked to decide whether they think is there the presence of the EU Delegation to Thailand? 85.1 percent believe that there is the EU Delegation in Thailand. However, the result of how close is a surprise. 51.1 percent say the EU and Thailand (government level) have “Moderate” relationship although 38.3 percent think they're quite “Close”. Only 2 percent pick “Highly close”. An amount of Thai study about ASEAN for many years and we are familiar with the association because every schools add ASEAN into teaching curriculum. It can be grouped up to 73.3 percent that Thais have studied about the EU at school. They were asked to evaluate a number of levels about their knowledge of the EU. The highest share is 34 percent for “Less than 20%” of the state of knowledge. Likewise, 29.8 percent say they know the bloc at “ Approximately 30-40% ”. The maximum of the number is “Approximately 100%” but the highest rate is reach up to only “Approximately 71-80%”.





## CHAPTER 6

### Thai's perceptions of Europe and the European Union news

Everything from across the globe can be searched by one small screen because we're living in a world where news is easily access. There are various types of reports in Thailand that people consume every day. For foreign news, it depends on people's interest because they can select which source they would like to follow. This section is going to clarify how often respondents obtain the Europe and the EU news.

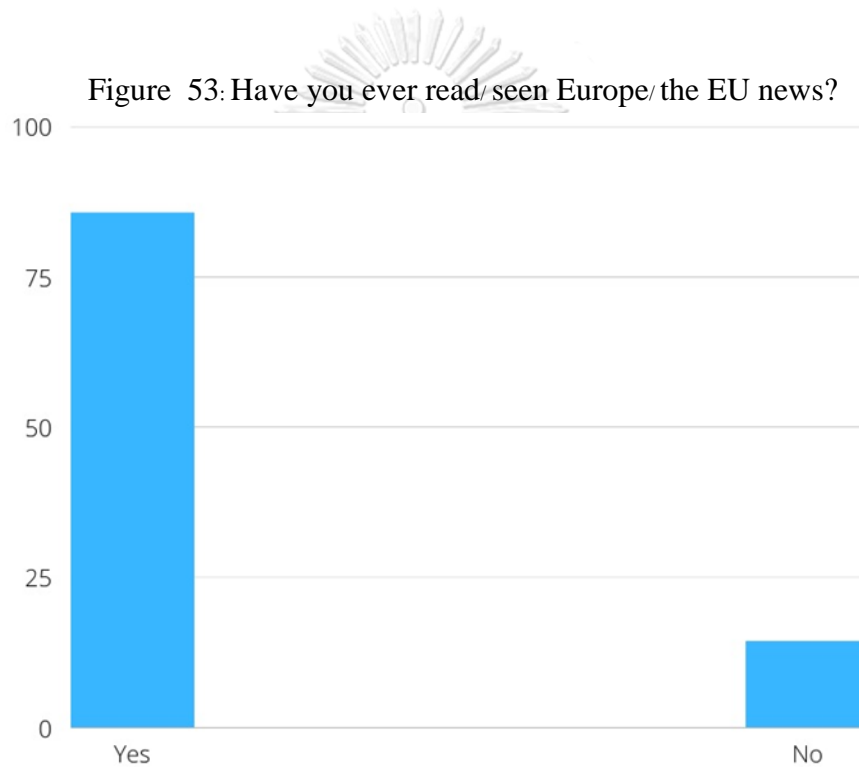


Figure 54: If yes, how often?

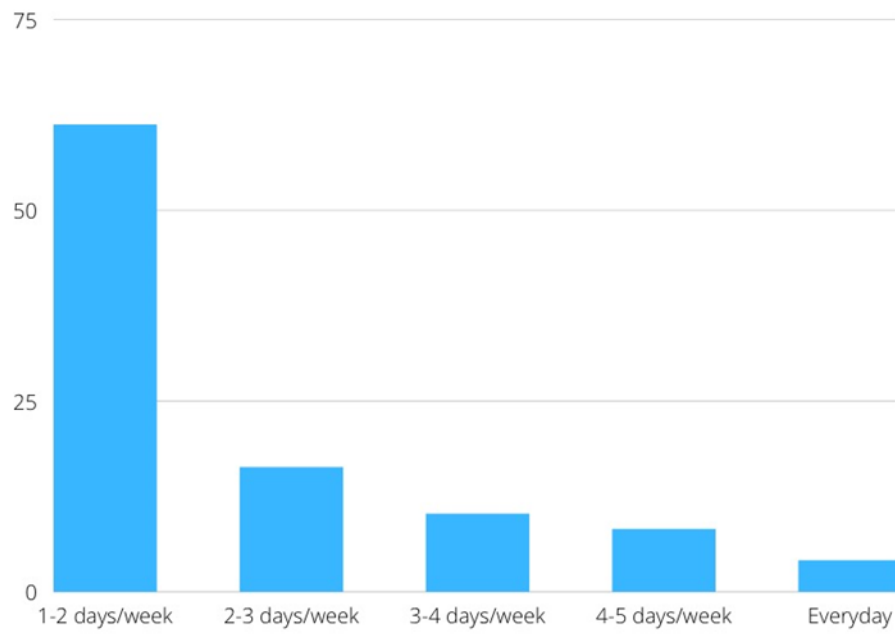


Figure 55: Which sources? (More than one answer is acceptable)

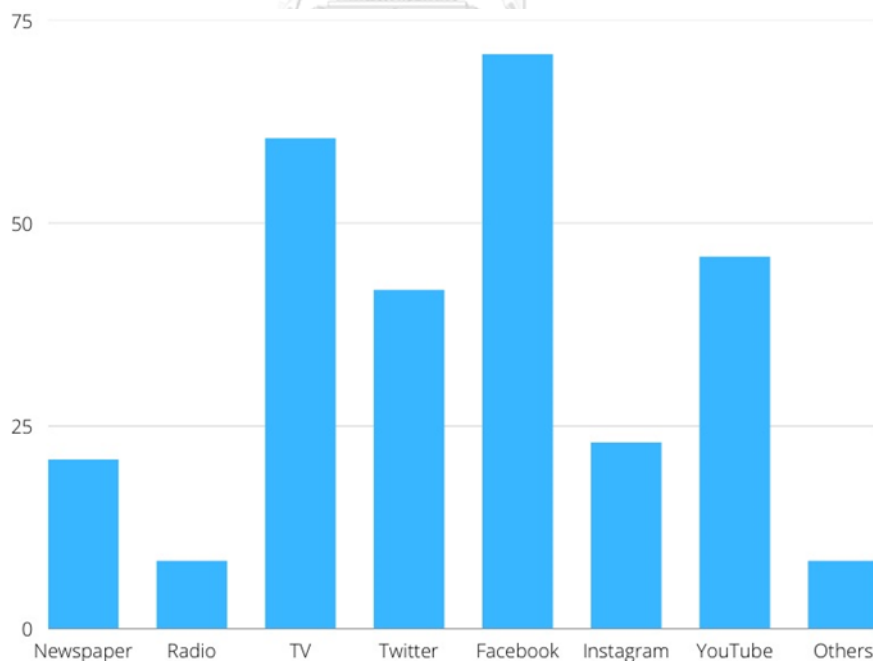


Figure 56: What was the news about? (More than one answer is acceptable)

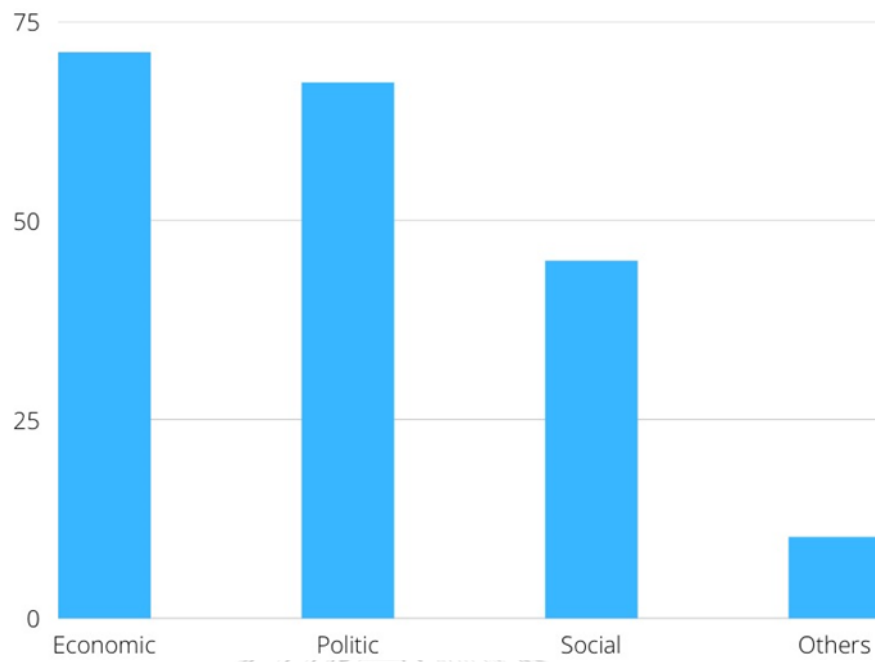
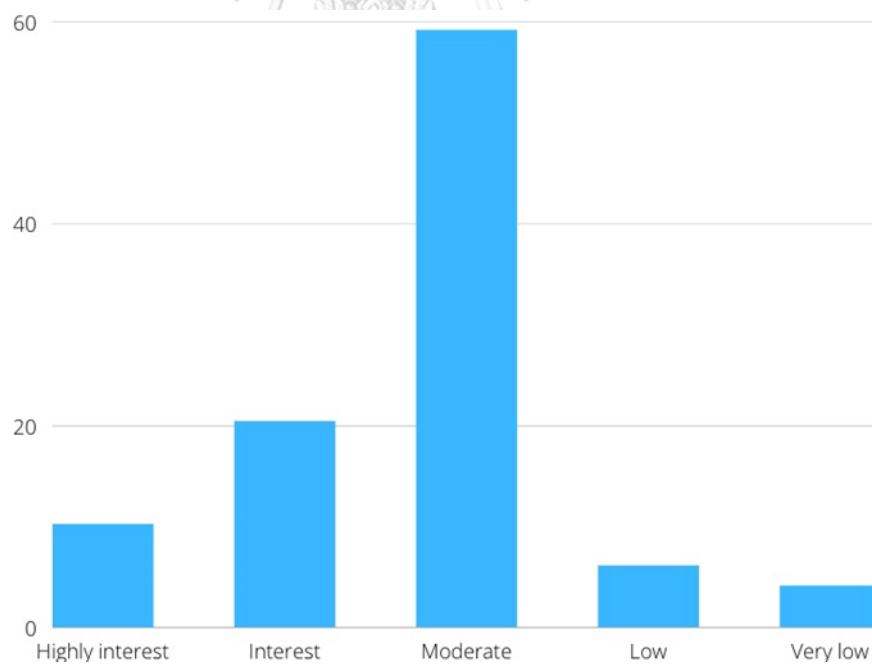


Figure 57: Which level do you interested in Europe and the EU news?



## Summary

Global Digital Report of We are Social and Hootsuite collected the data of online users' behavior (July-December 2021). The results state that 69 percent of Thais are online<sup>7</sup> and the number keep increasing. Thai ranked “Top” accessors to social media for news updating, 78 percent. The evaluation says that 91 percent of Thai register for their account because of news. It means that social media become the main sources for Thai to serve and receive news.

Respondents have seen Europe and the EU news before in an average of 85.4 percent. Most respondents have seen those news only 1-2 days per week, 62.5 percent. They announce that Facebook, 70.2 percent, is the main source to read Europe and the EU news, following with TV, YouTube and Twitter. Several kinds of news were on the list, 8.3 percent say “Economic” is the most broaden news in online platform, then “Politic” and “Social”. Even though Thais have seen Europe and the EU news in a high amount, yet, the volume of their interest is not impressive. The chart shows that 60.4 percent think the news about Europe and the EU is interesting at “Moderate” level, which means those news are not in their strong focus.

## Conclusion

Land suitability of Thailand is a prominent point to attract foreigners to make their visit, exchanging culture, trade, and settle. Many evidences confirm that Thai society is very open and accept new culture since the past, no matter how different and where they come from. There were various nations who hold a role in Thai society, for example, Chinese, Arabian and the Europeans. However, the Europeans had a leading character in our history.

Europe is being liked and known by most respondents. They verified that city and architecture and geography and landscape are Europe's solid point. This is not surprise because their building and nature are totally different from Thailand. Respondents also think language is attractive, such as, French, German and Spanish. Most of them learn these languages because they are fond of travelling to Europe. Respondents seem to interest in other dimension of Europe more than history. Numerous answers present that respondent had no idea which European nation first came to Thailand and Thai TV drama couldn't make them interest in Europe more. A large number of respondents evaluate themselves at low level on how well they know Europe as they disclose that Europe is not in their daily conversation.

If we talk about the relationship between Europe and Thailand. Respondents believe that we are different at everything, but, Europe is a good ally of Thailand. The UK, France, Germany, and Switzerland are the most popular countries where respondents trust that they are the closest allies of Thailand. Most respondents supported that Thai academy should teach student about Europe, in order to understand and prepare student to accept difference and relationship between the pair.

The EU has been partnering with Thailand since the beginning. However, a small group of respondents don't know the EU existence. Most respondents had no idea how the EU function but they assume that the EU is important to Europe and the world community in a high level. Europe and the EU news can be seen across many social media in Thailand. Nonetheless, nearly all respondents consume this type of news only a couple days per week. This statistic is relatively low if compare to the time they have spent on social media for the same duration.

Overall, the results show that respondents have both positive and negative perspectives of Europe and the EU which depends on each area. However, many respondents wrote to me in "Additional note" that they really appreciate how powerful Europe is and the EU activeness. They would like to visit Europe once in their lifetime. More than that, they would love to learn the Europeans culture and be friend

with them. It must be productive if they learn how many Europe states shaped their way to become developed nations and expert in many fields. Most importantly, to accept more complexity in the community because diversity is a unique identity which should be cherished.



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## VITA

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VAJIRADEVABHIBHAKTI



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